

THE SKETCH CHRISTMAS
NUMBER



THE SPRIGHTLY SPRITE OF THE CHRISTMAS TREE.

Setting by "The Sketch"; photograph by Reutlinger.

Lady Ullswater's Diamonds

By

Edgar Jepson & Richard Middleton

Illustrated by Frank Reynolds

THE clock was striking two in the morning, the hour at which quiet falls on the London streets, as Lady Ullswater's maid, her bodice swelling with gratitude, at last lifted the red wig from her Ladyship's charming brow, and bared to the electric light the soft, short crop of chestnut curls faintly shot with Time's envious grey. For Lady Ullswater had inherited a sleeplessness from a long line of noble but irregular ancestors which undermined the constitution of a new maid every six months, so that there were not wanting dear friends to observe that in founding her Home for Shattered Ladies' Maids she had done no more than her bare duty. However that may be, it is a fact that, in her joyful surprise at her mistress's going to bed at so reasonable an hour, her maid was shaken in her cold, iron resolve to give notice next morning.

Lady Ullswater, however, was in a pensive mood, very rare in her; and while her maid, having finished her disrobing task, stood waiting for her dismissal, she sat in her pretty flowered dressing-gown, gazing into the mirror, her charming brow knitted in an earnest effort to estimate Time's ravages during the last fifteen years.

"Do you think I'm getting very old, Jennings?" she said at last.

"Your Ladyship doesn't look a day more than twenty-five," said Jennings, with a mechanical precision acquired by long practice.

"Of course, that new hair is heavy; but I fancy that my own is getting thin."

"No, my Lady," said Jennings, happily suppressing a yawn. "But if it is, Dr. Forbes Brunton can recommend something, perhaps."

Lady Ullswater did not reply; but after gazing into the mirror with a smoother brow for a few minutes longer, she gracefully suffered Jennings to help her into bed.

"Have you put the whisky and cigars on the boudoir table? And where are the revolvers?" she said.

"Yes, my Lady; they're on the table. And one of the revolvers is under your pillow and the other is under the cushion on the couch."

Jennings went; Lady Ullswater switched off the light, and composed herself to sleep. Presently, with an impatient sigh, she turned on to her left side. At the end of another ten minutes, with another impatient sigh, she turned on to her right side. Why did Lady Ullswater sigh? What troubled her that night? Was it the thought of her irregular ancestors, for whose jovial

carouses in the gallant past she paid in so many wakeful hours? Was she sighing for Ullswater, dead this fifteen years, whom the papers declared, she still loved with unchanging ardour? Whatever she sighed for, she could not sleep. Her clock tinkled half-past two; three distant clocks chimed a quarter to three. With a little groan she slipped out of bed, put on her dressing-gown, thrust her feet into her slippers, caught up the eider-down coverlet from her bed, and went into her moonlit boudoir.

She stretched herself on the couch and drew the coverlet over her. But sleep would not come; and she was on the very point of falling into the despair of the sleepless, when the scraping of a foot on the balcony set her

tingling with excitement and curiosity and pleasant anticipation.

She sat up on the couch, drew the revolver from under the cushion, groped for her slippers with her feet and thrust them into them, arranged her dressing-gown, and waited with her eyes on the window. She saw a tall form outside it, heard the snap of the forced catch, and the man came into the room and closed the window softly after him. She let him make three steps towards her, raised the revolver and covered him, pressed the switch with her foot and flooded the room with light.

He stopped short; and she could see his eyes behind his mask blinking in the glare. Then he said softly, "Nailed, by Jove!" and

[Continued on page 6.]



She sat up on the couch and drew the revolver from under the cushion.

After the Christmas-Eve Shopping.



"TICKETS, PLEASE."

DRAWN BY W. HEATH ROBINSON.

louder, with extreme anxiety, "If you're going to fire, for goodness' sake aim at me!"

Lady Ullswater laughed softly and said, "I'm not going to fire—if you are nice and obedient. Take off your mask." But she did not lower the unwavering revolver.

She observed with satisfaction, as they fumbled with the fastenings of the mask, that the burglar's fingers were white, and that his well-polished nails shone in the bright light. At last the mask came off and revealed a pleasant young face adorned with a small moustache under a rather large nose, and a pair of steady grey eyes, which regarded her with a serious curiosity not untinged with admiration.

"I—er—came about the diamonds, you know," he said. "But apparently—"

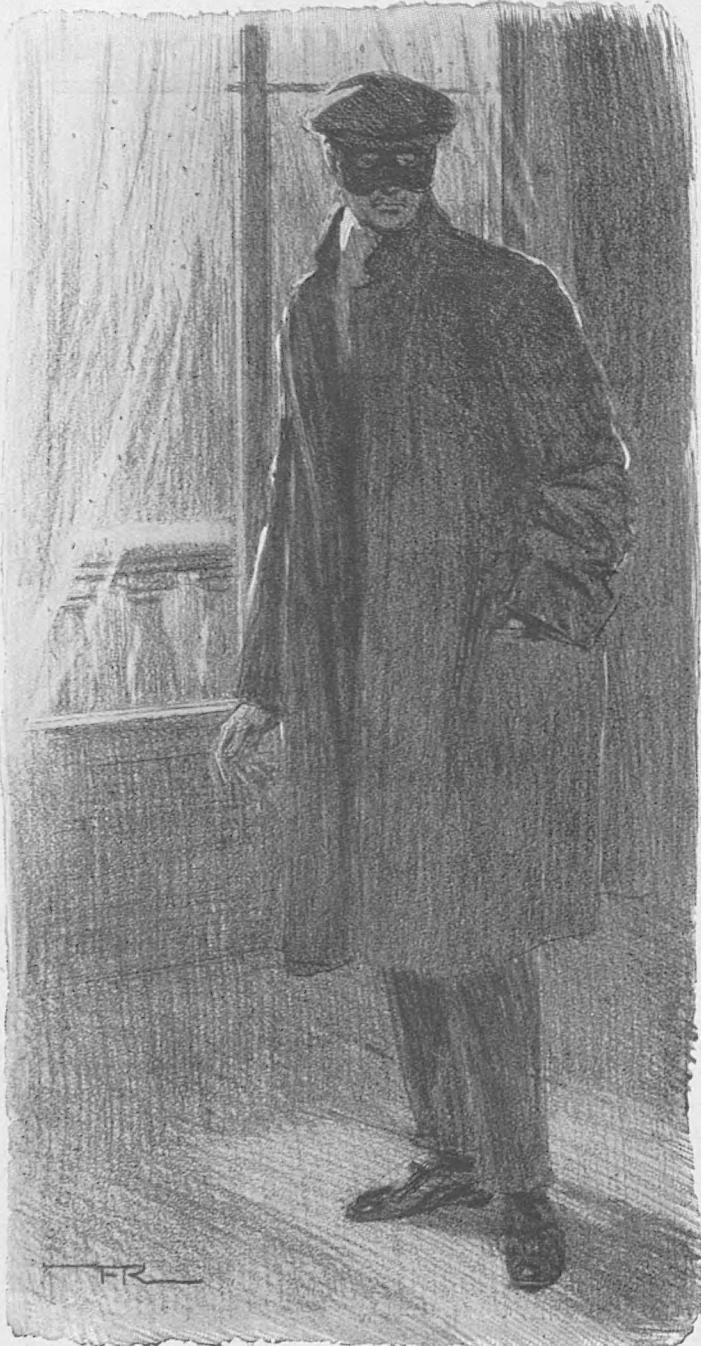
"Oh, no; not at all," she interrupted kindly. "Come and sit down and tell me all about it. Help yourself to some whisky-and-soda and a cigar."

"I hardly like to smoke here," said the young man, looking at the box of cigars with a doubtful air. "The curtains—"

"Oh, nonsense! You've been reading something by a second-rate cynic about widows' weeds! I didn't choose them myself!" she said, smiling.

He looked somewhat surprised at her quickness of perception, and mixed a whisky-and-soda, and chose a cigar with thoughtful deliberation. Then he sat down, looking very sedate, but quite at home; and his eyes rested on her face with an admiration to which she was very well used.

She examined him curiously, and then she said: "You're rather young, aren't you? What kind of a degree did you take?"



The man came into the room.

"Only a pass. But I got my blue for rugger—Rugby football," he said modestly.

"That's not so bad. But I don't see why you took to burgling so soon after coming down from Oxford."

"Oh, well, it's pretty simple, don't you know. I have my

position in Society to keep up. Of course, it's not your kind of Society; but it takes money. A schoolmaster's job was of no use; so it lay between the City and this; and I wanted to keep my hands clean."

Lady Ullswater nodded her head with understanding.

"I see. You read about my diamonds in the papers, and came to fetch them. I have those paragraphs put in myself, you know. There's hardly a night passes without my having a burglar up here. They've kicked most of the paint off the balcony pillars climbing up them."

"Oh, that explains the whisky and cigars," said the young man; and he breathed a faint sigh of relief.

"Why, I believe you thought they were for myself! How horrid of you!" she said, laughing. "You see, I suffer from insomnia, and someone to talk to is a necessity. Other people are such sleepy-heads; but burglars—"

"Of course," said the young man. "And if I'd only known, I might have come six weeks ago. But, you know, I'm only a beginner—a rotten amateur, I'm afraid, at this game, too," he added with some bitterness. "I suppose, though, you have diamonds?"

"Drawers full. Why, I trod on a necklace this morning with my bare foot"—she blushed prettily—"and it hurt horribly. And yet you climb up to fetch them. Look here."

She pulled a drawer out of a cabinet by the couch and poured about a quart of uncut diamonds on to the table.

"These don't belong to the set; but they're pretty well all the same," she said, passing her fingers through the heap. "What do you see?"

"Motors and yachts and palaces; a world of acquaintances, and never a friend."

"And yet you climb, solemn one! I'm afraid I only see burglars," she said, looking at him oddly.

"You're very rich," said the young man sadly.

"They call me mad; but I never said such a silly thing as that in all my life!" she said impatiently. "I've neither youth nor sleep nor love! I'm a pauper!"

"It must be your own fault then," said the young man.

"No: it isn't my head, but my heart that makes me talk like this. Are you in love, or married?"

"Neither, thank goodness!" cried the young man with devout fervour.

"Thank goodness indeed," said Lady Ullswater; then she paused, hesitating, eyeing him oddly, and said: "Would you like to marry Ullswater House and a quarter of a million a year? Would you like to marry fifteen motor-cars and a steam-yacht? Would you like to marry a town house and three country houses? In fine, would you like to marry *me*?"

"Heaven forbid!" cried the young man, starting to his feet.

"The property is improving," she said, a little pitifully.

"You forget that, though I'm only a burglar, I'm still—" He broke off suddenly. "Oh, it's ridiculous! Have you offered all the members of my profession you've met this largain?"

Lady Ullswater blushed. "You're the first! I swear it! It's my fault—I ought to have explained before I asked you. It's Ullswater. He's dead, of course—fifteen years; but he still confuses everything I do."

"Ullswater?"

"Yes: you've read in the papers about my never having forgotten him. I had those paragraphs put in myself, you know. I hate the man."

"But how—"

"Oh, I did hate him, though I had less than a year of him. And I made up my mind that, if I married again, it would be someone who had youth, enterprise, honour, good sense—everything that he hadn't. For fifteen years I've sat on my sacks of money waiting for him. And, a few years ago, I made up my mind that I was most likely to find the qualities I wanted among the members of your profession. And, oh! the disappointments I've had!"

"I am afraid you must have," said the young man thoughtfully. "The taint of commercialism is spoiling it, like everything else."

"And so you see how pleased I was to-night to meet someone who came up to my requirements. And now"—she sank back in despair—"you refuse!"

The young man took a dozen steps up and down the room, with troubled face and knitted brow. Now and again he looked at her earnestly, and his admiring eyes shone on her.



The face of the inspector . . . was a patchwork of slow emotions.

"No!" he cried at last. "I can't do it! I climbed up the balcony to take a motor-car and a yacht as the reward of a successful enterprise involving personal risk; but you would have me steal them."

"But, indeed, there'd be lots of personal risk in marrying me! I don't want to boast, but on my day I'm a perfect demon. Besides, I—I might start learning the fiddle. Oh, there's lots of personal risk in marriage!"

"That puts a more honourable complexion on it," said the young man, weakening. But a cock crowed loudly in a neighbouring alley, and he cried, "By Jove! As late as that! I must be going!" And he stepped to the window.

He looked out, and started back, saying, "Hello! I don't understand this. The square seems full of policemen."

"Indeed! What are they doing?" said Lady Ullswater listlessly.

"They're watching this house, this balcony, I believe."

"They're awfully officious; as if I couldn't manage my own burglars! Wave them away," she said, with the same indifferent listlessness. Her disappointment was still heavy on her spirit.

"They're coming up the steps. I'm afraid they're coming into the house to look for me."

A thundering knock rang through the house.

"Let them come," said Lady Ullswater. "It may do me good to scold a policeman."

"But you forget — your good name."

"Now, that's very nice! That's the first nice thing you've said to me! I shall tell my friends about it when they hint I'm growing old," cried Lady Ullswater, restored to something of her wonted brightness.

There was a noisy bustle on the stairs; the frightened voice of Jennings filled the corridor with uproar; and there came a knock at the door.

"My Lady! My Lady! there's a burglar in your rooms! The police is here!"

"You'd better sit down and take another cigar; you've let yours out," said Lady Ullswater.

"They're very good," said the young man, with a faint sigh; and he sat down and helped himself to one.

"You may come in, Jennings," said Lady Ullswater coolly. "And bring the inspector with you. I don't want an army of policemen all over my rooms."

The excited Jennings flung into the room, and promptly had hysterics in the corner. Behind her came a large, round inspector.

At the sight of the burglar, he assumed on the instant the litheness of an elephant about to spring.

"Shut the door, inspector," said Lady Ullswater coldly. "And then tell me what you mean by intruding at this hour of the morning."

"That man, my Lady," said the inspector, with flashing eyes; and he waved a white-gloved hand of amazing magnitude at the burglar.

"And what has my second cousin got to do with it?"

The inspector gasped.

"Beg pardon, my Lady, but Police-constable C 111 saw a man of criminal appearance climb up to this window and—"

"I dared him to do it," said Lady Ullswater coldly. "Or, rather, like Rapunzel, I let down my hair and he climbed up it."

The inspector looked at Lady Ullswater's curls, and gasped again.

"Lady Ullswater, I can't—" began the young man in a tone which bade fair to spoil everything.

"Hold your tongue, Prince, and leave me to deal with this officious person."

Jennings was squawking in her corner like a hen in the jaws of a fox; and the face of the inspector, who had just seen the diamonds, was a patchwork of slow emotions.

"Of course," he choked out, "if your Ladyship says it's all right—"

"Prince, give the inspector a cigar, and squirt some soda-water over Jennings," said Lady Ullswater.

Jennings recovered at once, and the inspector said— "Sorry not to be convivial, your Ladyship, but I'm on dooty."

"Oh!" She

handed him a diamond the size of a hazel-nut. "For a scarfpin. Jennings, show the inspector out."

Jennings, pink-eyed and panting, led the amazed, but grateful, inspector out, and the door closed behind them.

The young man rose with a sudden jerk, and gazed down at Lady Ullswater with eyes she could not meet.

"By Jove!" he said softly, under his breath. "You're a wonder! Such a chance for the *sprece injuria formæ*; and your good name—and—and everything—"

He stopped short; and Lady Ullswater could not find any words at all.

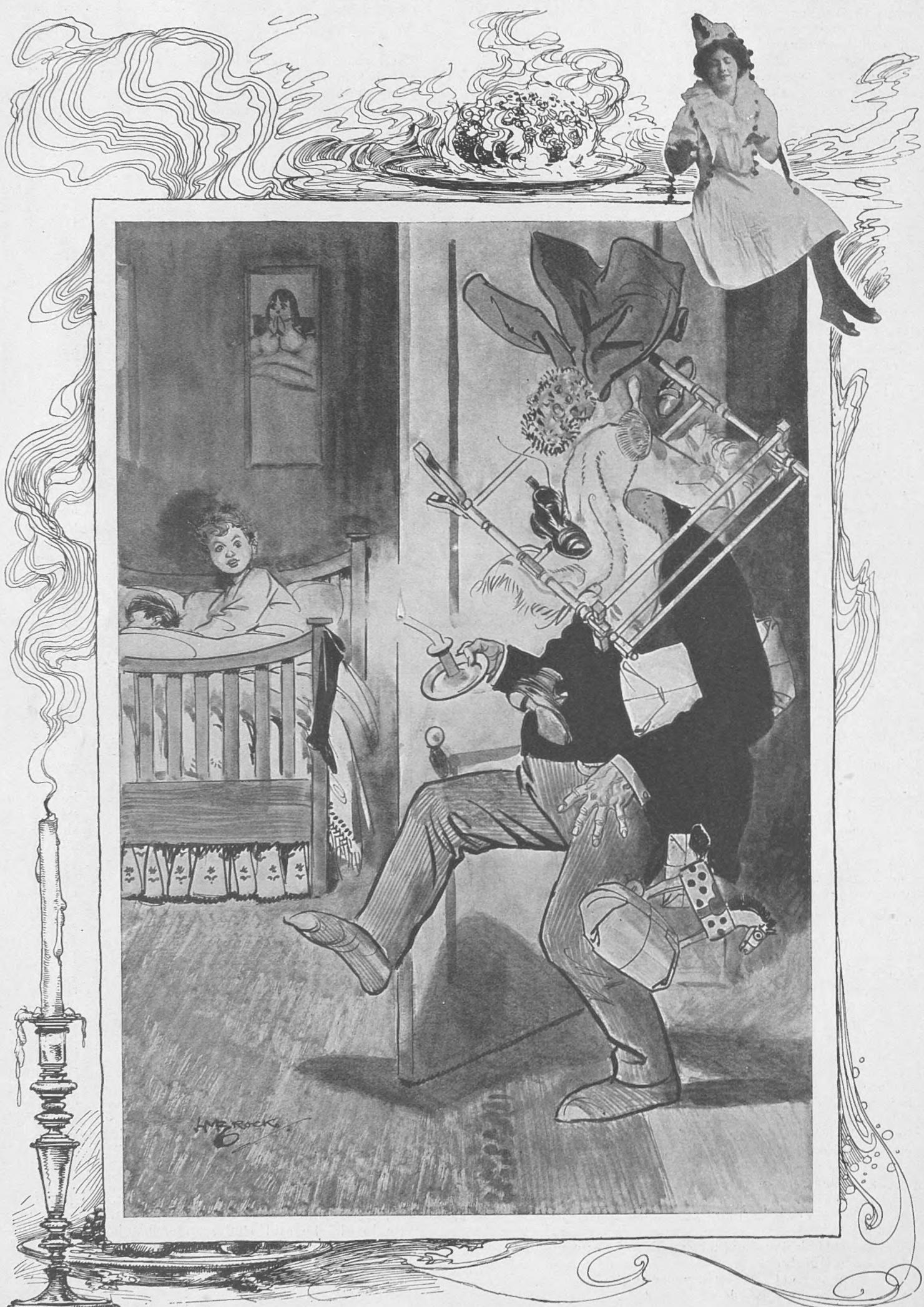
He stepped swiftly round the table, dropped on the couch, and slipped his arm round her.

"What's—what's your name?" gasped Lady Ullswater.

"Anything—anything you like, Rapunzel dear," said the young man incoherently; and he kissed her.

The Santa Claus Booby-Trap:

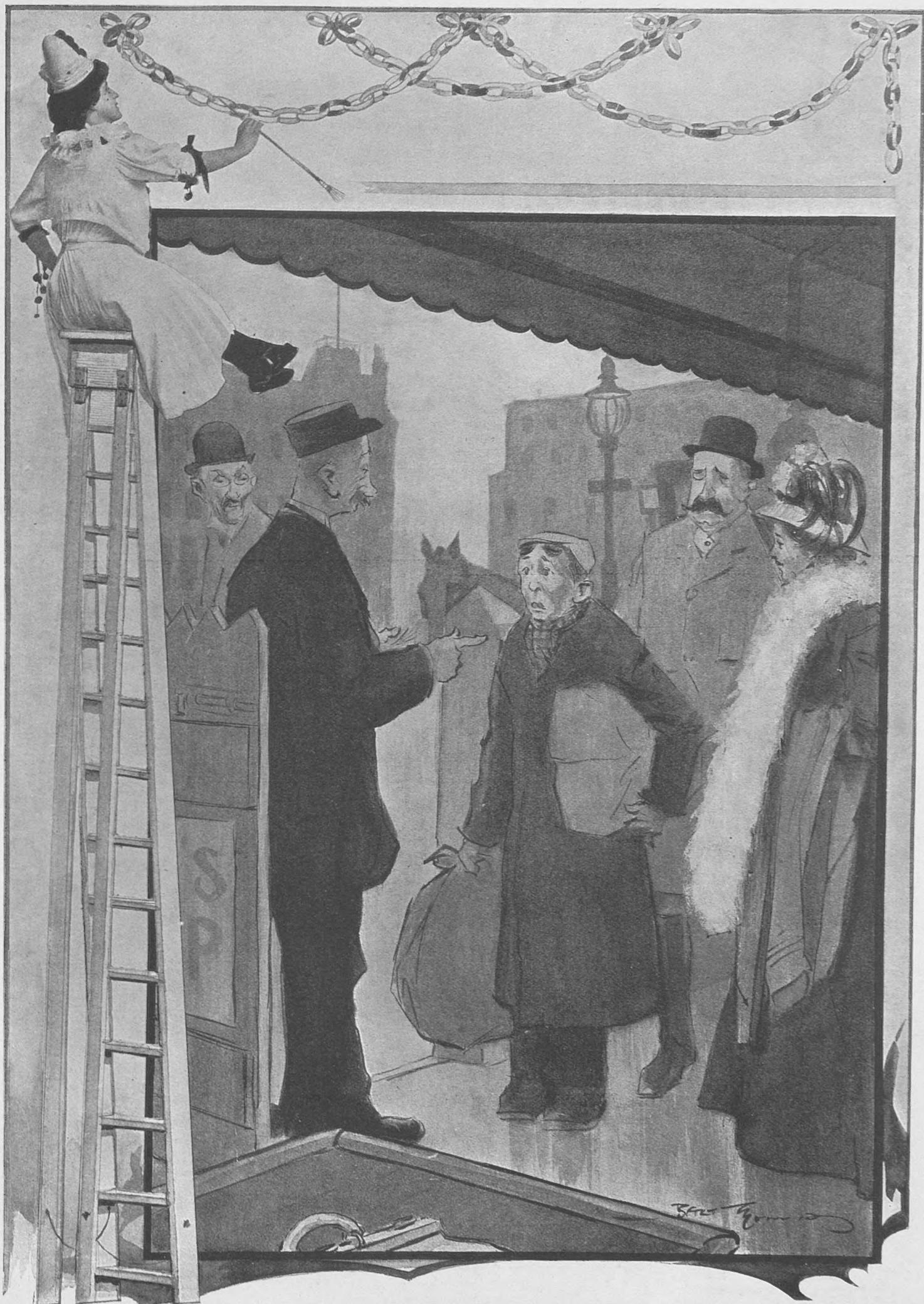
PATENT NOT APPLIED FOR.



VOICE FROM THE BED (*as the booby-trap falls upon "Santa Claus"*): Wake up, Reggie. We've caught the old buffer this time!

DRAWN BY H. M. BROCK; PHOTOGRAPH OF MISS ELAINE INESCORT (IN THE BORDER) BY FOULSHAM AND BANFIELD.

Cheap Rare on Christmas Eve.

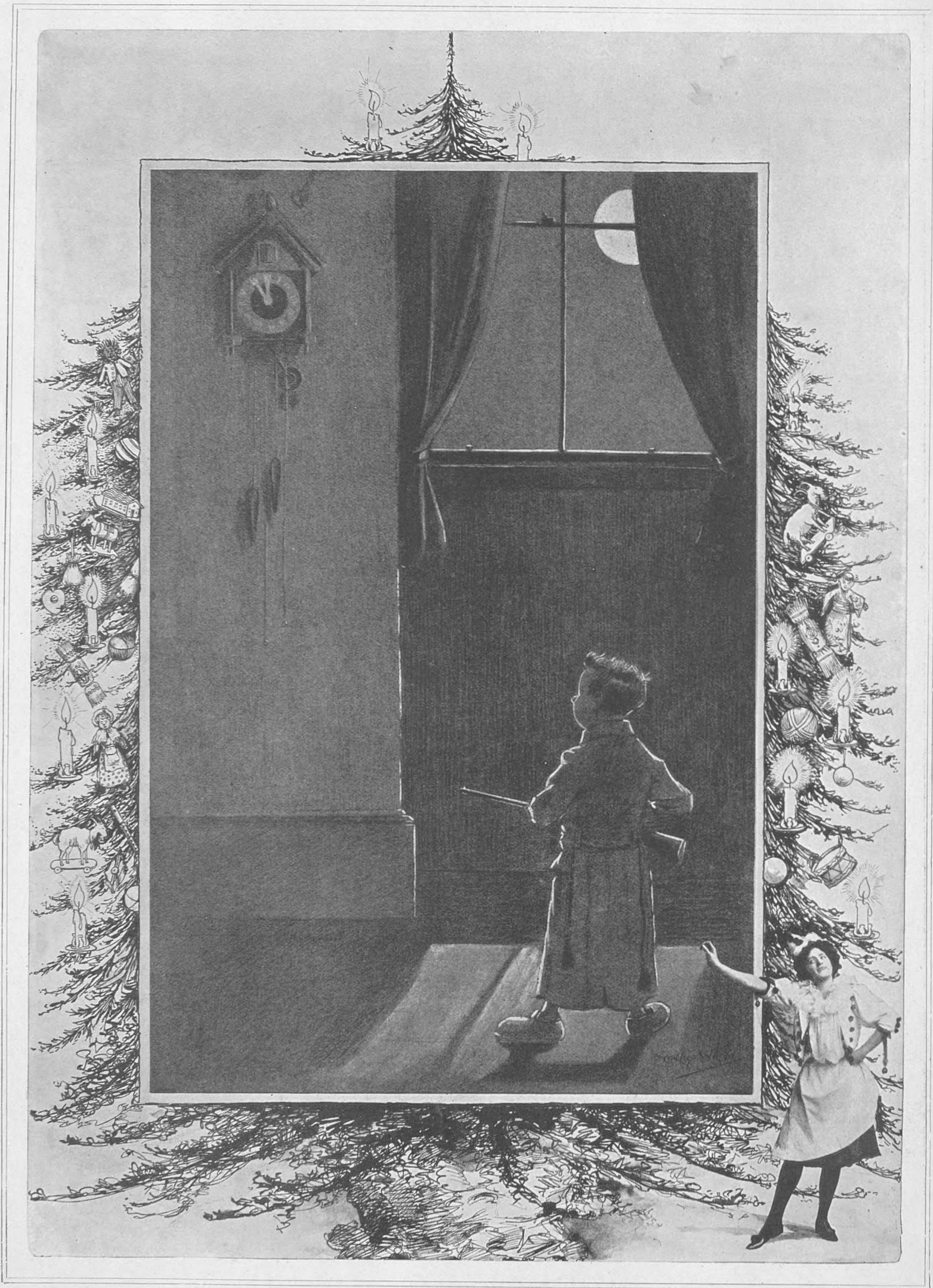


THE TICKET-COLLECTOR (*to the youth who has given up a half-ticket*): 'Ere, 'ow old are you?

THE YOUTH: I ain't twelve yet.

THE TICKET-COLLECTOR: Well, next time you wants to travel you just get a shave. It looks suspicious.

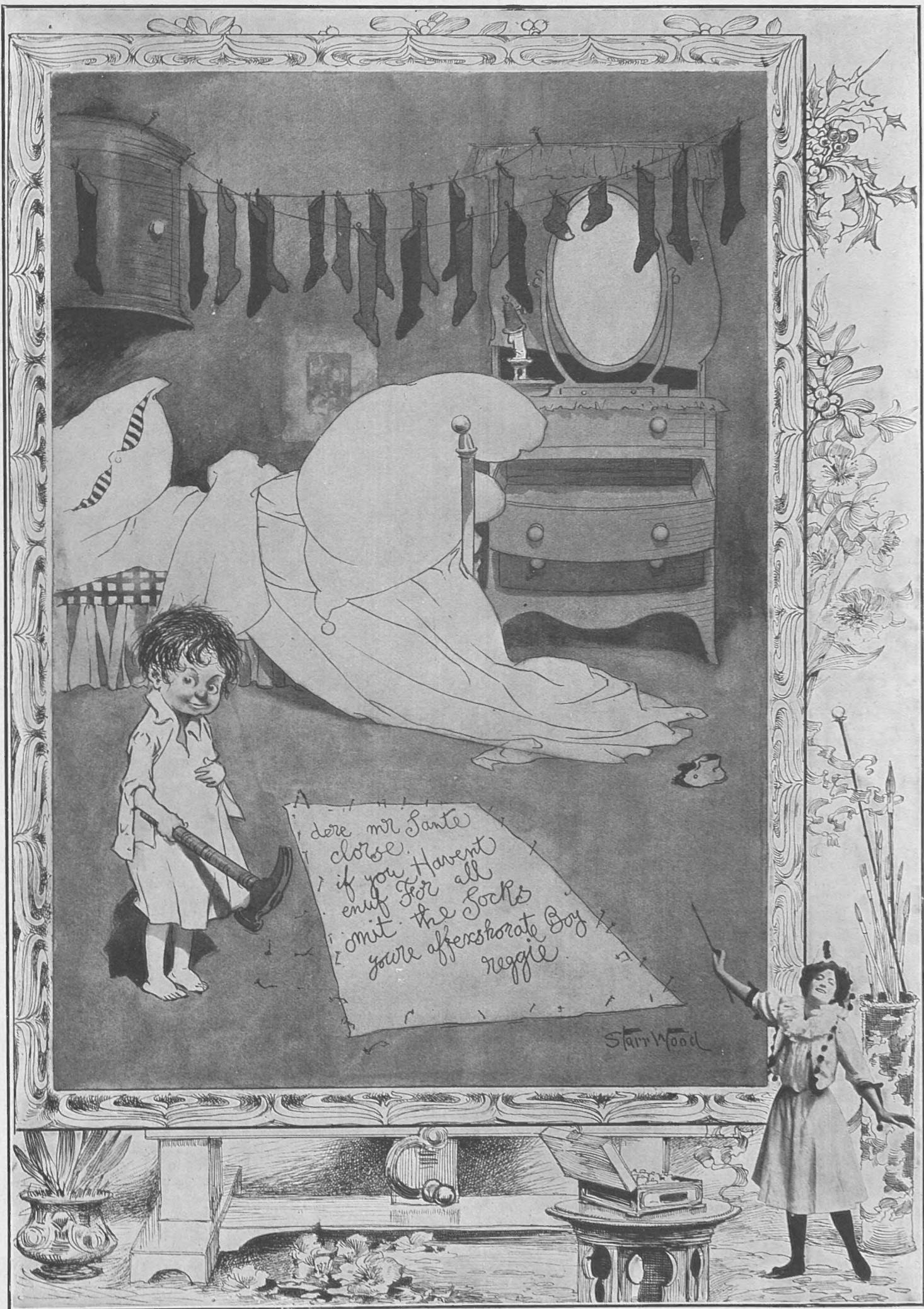
Waiting for the Bird.



WHY THE CUCKOO CLOCK STOPPED.

DRAWN BY GODFREY WILSON; PHOTOGRAPH OF MISS ELAINE INESCORT (IN THE BORDER) BY FOULSHAM AND BANFIELD.

Socks and Shares.



HIS MESSAGE TO SANTA CLAUS.

DRAWN BY STARK WOOD; PHOTOGRAPH OF MISS ELAINE INESCORT (IN THE BORDER) BY FOULSHAM AND BANFIELD.

A MILLION A MINUTE FOR LIFE: AND HOW TO GET IT.

By FRANK RICHARDSON.

IN the height of the Silly Season of 2003 the proprietor of *Bits and Pieces* entered the office of that indispensable journal. On his face was a smile of such beauty that it amounted almost to holy gladness. Said he to the editor, "I have just struck the greatest idea on earth."

"Good."

From his pocket he produced a large quantity of scraps of paper, on each of which was a beautiful device. (Six of these beautiful devices are inadequately reproduced on this page.)

"These are the work of my little son, Archibald," the proprietor explained.

"I trust he is not ill. If you are not careful with the boy he will go to the bad and become an R.A."

"Archibald is well, I thank you. Now look carefully at these sketches, and tell me what they represent — Fig. 2, for instance."

"That is probably a common bat, such as is used for cricket; or it might be some sort of patent lighthouse."

"No, it is as you originally surmised — a domestic cricket-bat. Ninety-nine people out of a hundred would swear it was a bat. What do you make of Fig. 307?"

"Clearly, that is any sort of cheap cat, engaged in smoking a cheroot for purposes of its own."

"What you take for a cheroot is merely a slight thickening of the near-side whisker, due to faulty draughtsmanship. What of Fig. 1? Eh!"

"I am nonplussed, baffled for the moment. To me it seems to represent nothing, or nil, or nix."

"Think again."

"My brain whirls."

"Fig. 1 represents one fig."

"You astound me."

"Bright idea, isn't it?"

"Effulgent, undefeated. Fig. 30,247 presents certain difficulties not insuperable perhaps, but sufficiently alarming for ordinary purposes. What does it purport to be? Porridge?"

"No."

"A bird's-eye view of a puddle?"

"Wrong again."

"I can go no farther. I am at my wits' end."

"That is a fancy map of Scotland," said the proprietor triumphantly.

"Good heavens! Hold my hand."

"Now, we'll pass on to Fig. 928."

"Let us. I am entirely in your hands. That is evidently a mutton-chop that has seen trouble."

"On the contrary, it is quite the reverse—absolutely the reverse. It is an ordinary whisker, such as might be worn by . . ."

"You surprise me. I know little of whiskers, but I cannot conceive that such a thing could happen to a man's face."

"That is a whisker, is it? Well, well, I say no more. It may be a whisker, but to me it seems somehow left-handed. It looks

more like an impressionist picture of the type of Dowager Duchess invented by Father Bernard Vaughan. However, your son Archibald seems to be an impressionist, and to suffer from the most horrible impressions. His view of Scotland is, to say the least, cynical. Of course, no country looks its best on a map: but Archie's Scotland is really a sad sight. One cannot conceive that in such surroundings Bobbie Burns wrote the most exquisite of all poems—

"Hoot, toot,
I'm ganging oot."

"Possibly not. I flatter myself that you will be unable to solve Fig. 1,092,680."

"No, you do not flatter yourself. You are stating a cold fact. To me the thing conveys no sort of message whatever."

"That is the earth as it appears through a telescope to an inhabitant of Mars. The black dot in the centre represents the top of Hall Caine's top-hat."

The Editor buried his face in his hands.

"These things are too hard for me. Remember, my life is of value. I am not a married man. Spare me any more of Archibald's work. His intellect is too great, his imagination too vast. Remember that, though an Editor, I am human. My brain is not what it was before I saw your son's products."

"You don't see what I'm driving at, do you?"

"Heaven forbid!"

"You are aware that, according to the latest Parliamentary Blue-book, one fifth of the inhabitants of Great Britain live solely on anagram competitions."

"And that the other four-fifths are Poles, Germans, and Americans who propound these puzzles. Yes, of course, I know that."

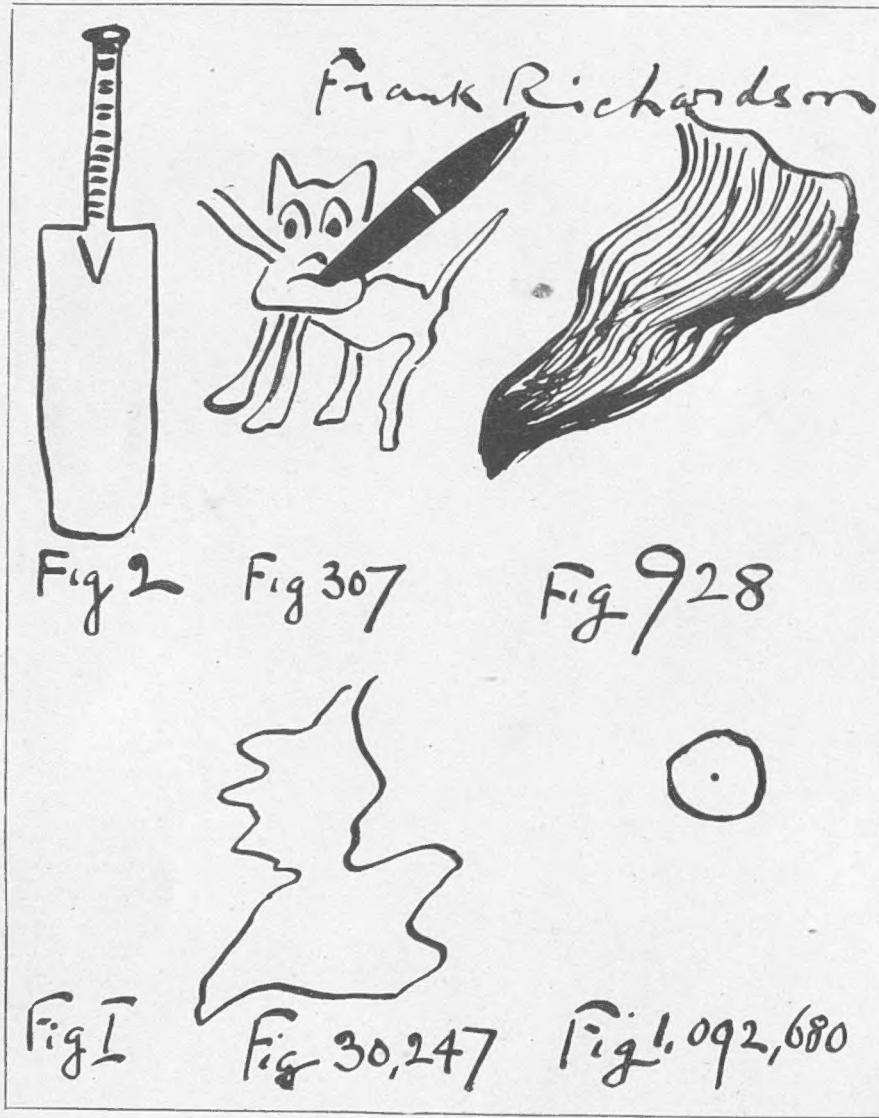
"Well, I shall offer a prize of a million a minute for life to

the winner of this competition—to the man who solves all Archibald's pictures."

"But that will work out at rather a large sum, even if the winner only lives a week!" said the editor.

"It is a large sum to pay. But it is not a large sum to offer. However, no human being could live a second after solving Archie's pictures. Indeed, no intellect is capable of correctly interpreting my son's work. He beats Whistler, Browning, and Wagner! Fig. 1, for instance, is practically impossible to solve. And if any competitor should decide that Fig. 928 represented a whisker, we could announce that it was a map of the Isle of Man. Do you take my meaning? I rely on you (at an increased salary of £200 a year) to see that no member of the public shall lay bare the secrets of my dear son's artistic soul."

"Mr. Bottlebaum," said Mr. Nazelheimer respectfully, as he grasped the proprietor's hand with respect and gratitude, "you are a great and good man."



The Dear Child's Little Joke.



THE AMBUSH.

DRAWN BY JOHN HASSALL, PHOTOGRAPH OF MISS ELAINE INESCORT (IN THE BORDER) BY FOULSHAM AND BANFIELD.

THE MAN WHO WAS FAITHFUL.

BY

OWEN OLIVER

ILLUSTRATED BY F. SPURRIER.



If I was John Dane I had forgotten myself!

I HALF roused from heavy slumber as a tinkling clock struck twelve. Something unfamiliar in the sound of the clock seemed to worry me and keep me from drifting back into sleep. After I had blinked drowsily for a few moments, I noticed that it was a strange clock on a strange mantelshelf. I sat up on the sofa and found myself in a strange room, lit by a strange lamp. I stumbled over to the window and pulled up the blind. There was very little light, but I could make out an old-fashioned garden, a rustic coach-house, and a winding chalk road, climbing along a low hill with several tops. A quaint church, nearly all steeple, stood upon one of them. The garden and the coach-house were new to me. I did not think I remembered the road and hills. I was sure I did not remember the church. The clothes I had on fitted as if I had worn them for some time; but they were such as I never wore. The well-used pipe in the pocket was not mine. Indeed, I scarcely ever smoked one. I did not know the bulky brown pocket book. Mine was a thin black one, and I hated to have it overfull. I gripped my arm sharply to see if I was dreaming. If I was I could feel hurt. I put up my hand to my face, and found a well-grown beard instead of a clean-shaven chin. I staggered over to the strange mirror; and staggered back a step. If I was John Dane I had forgotten myself!

I re-discovered my features one by one, and found the slightly blunted fore-finger of my left hand. I had damaged it when I was a boy, but the traces of the injury had almost disappeared. My moustache would look the same, I thought, if I waxed the ends again. My hair was a trifle thinner in front—as if time had passed! I snatched a newspaper from the side table. It was dated August 17, 1897! And I remembered nothing since July 1894.

What did I remember last? Let me think. It was on the twenty-something; I went—somewhere where I had never been before. I took money—two or three hundred pounds. It was in connection with my business—I was a solicitor, if I remembered rightly. I went out of a big station, through a narrow street, and up a hill. Then I came to a building where some men were hauling up a beam with a crane. Someone shouted, and—my memory stopped there.

I stood thinking, with the paper shaking to and fro in my hand, till I heard a light footstep on the stair. There was nowhere to hide, and my legs would not move. A strange, fair-haired woman, in a dressing-gown and slippers, entered. She nodded to me familiarly.

"I told you you would go to sleep," she said, with amiable disapproval. "It's no use denying it. You're not half awake yet. You look as if you'd had a nightmare. Why, you're shivering with cold." She poured out some whiskey, half filled the tumbler with soda-water, and handed it to me. "It's a good job you have a wife to look after you!"

I let the tumbler fall, and it broke with a crash.

My wife! This comely, fair-haired woman! The wife I remembered was quite different. She had black hair and dark eyes; and all places were the same when she was in them. Her name was Violet. There was a little boy, too; a little boy of three, who was named after me and used to follow me all over the house. He would be six now, if I was John Dane, and he was my little boy. If I wasn't John Dane, who was I? I groaned, and caught at a chair. The fair-haired woman

took my arm and helped me to sit down.

"Poor old Frank!" she said compassionately. So I wasn't John Dane.... "Is it the same old trouble?" She touched my head at the back, and I put up my hand, and found a scar about three inches long. The beam must have fallen on me, if I remembered what I thought I remembered. "You don't have the attacks so often now," she consoled me. "You'll soon be all right. Lean on me, and I'll help you upstairs—"

"I—I seem to have—to have forgotten something," I told her. My voice was faint and husky, but I recognised it as my voice.

"You always do, you know," she said, "when you are like this. You will remember in the morning, when you are well."

"I shall remember in the morning," I repeated vacantly. So I was "Frank," and the husband of the fair-haired woman. She was a pleasant woman, and no doubt I should remember that I was fond of her; and I should forget about the other wife and child.

I was well enough in the morning, but I did not remember the fair-haired woman. I thought I remembered myself and the others; but it seemed so impossible that I concluded it must be a dream. I dared not mention it, for fear they would think I was mad, and put me in an asylum. So I resolved to let them suppose that I was ill, and suffering from temporary forgetfulness, till I found out more about myself.

I stayed in my room for two days. The fair-haired woman waited on me. In the afternoons and evenings she brought her sewing and sat with me. She was not talkative for a woman, and I dared not ask direct questions. So I learnt very little from her. On the third day, I pretended to be rather better, and walked about the house and garden, leaning on her arm. I found out the names of the servants, and which room was which, and who the neighbours were. The next day some of them came in and talked to me about my orchard and my fields and my crops. The doctor talked about the same things; and I nodded and said, "Yes, yes."

On the following day I learnt that I had a little room of my own. I looked through the correspondence and accounts that I found there. I had a letter about some grazing that I wanted to let, and another about a horse that I thought of buying. The fair-haired woman looked over my shoulder as I read them, and suggested answers. I asked her to write for me, and when she wrote I found out my name. I ransacked the drawers and cupboards when she was out of the way, and came upon our marriage-certificate. I pieced things together as well as I could, and in about a week I had discovered enough about myself to take up my life again. I made blunders, of course; but people put them down to my "attack." My memory was always indifferent during the attacks, it appeared, but not usually so bad as on this occasion.

My discoveries, briefly, were as follows: I was Frank Davidson, farmer, of Bolt Hill Farm, Ashingham, Kent. I had come there three years before. I had money (the bank-notes had been in my waistcoat pockets, not in the missing pocket-book), and I had hired the farm. From the accounts, I seemed to be doing pretty well. I had been married to the fair-haired woman for fifteen months. There was a fair-haired baby of three months, named Francesca, after me. She



A strange, fair-haired woman, in a dressing-gown and slippers, entered.

knew me quite well, her mother declared. I grew very fond of the fair-haired baby.

I could learn nothing of my life before I came to Ashingham. I gathered that no one there knew anything about my previous history, except that I had scarcely recovered from an accident when I came. If my memories were not a delusion, I must have lost recollection of myself after the accident, and started my life afresh. I had been brought up on a farm. That would explain my choice of occupation. Frank Davidson was a character in a book which I had been reading just before the accident. That would account for my name. The fair-haired woman was sufficient excuse for my marriage. It was all easy enough to explain to myself; but it was not likely that anyone else would believe the explanation—least of all the delightful, unreasonable being whom I remembered as Violet. If I traced myself, I should be worse off than at present. Moreover, I could not recollect anything that would enable me to trace myself. So I tried to make myself believe that my memories were an illusion, and that I must put them aside and live the life in which I found myself as well as I could. I liked the life. I liked my neighbours. I liked the fair-haired baby. I liked the fair-haired woman, too, in a way. Her air of proprietorship annoyed me; but this would cease when I got rid of the phantasy of the dark-haired, dark-eyed, passionate woman that I called "Violet." The fair-haired woman was very good to me. I decided to be good to her. I think I was.

Three months had passed, not unhappily, when something else flashed into my memory. We were in the drawing-room one dull November afternoon. The dog was sleeping on the hearthrug. Lucy—that was the fair-haired woman's name—set the baby on his back, and laughed at me over her shoulder. I remembered suddenly that Violet looked at me like that, as she played with *our* baby. It was in the garden of our house. The house was at Upper Tulse Hill! I remembered the road—the name of the house—everything! I rushed up to my room and flung myself on the sofa, and clenched my hands and shook myself to and fro. I wanted my own wife, not the fair-haired woman, or any other woman in the world. But what could I do?

What could I do? Try to answer that before you blame me. If I told the truth, nobody would believe me. The fair-haired woman would be disgraced. The fair-haired baby would be nameless. Violet would certainly disbelieve me. She was never reasonable where other women and I were concerned. But she might be in want—she and the boy—and need my assistance. I must go to them. I would steal away when my headache was gone. I would make up some story about my life for these three years and more. I would take her abroad where the fair-haired woman would never find us. . . . I did not think about the wrong to her. . . . But presently she came to me, and bathed my forehead with scent, and covered me with a rug, and told me I was ill and must sleep. She bent down and kissed me. . . . There was never a better or sweeter woman in the world. I knew that then, and I know it now. I could no more treat her unfairly than I could hurt a child who trusted me. I decided to face the question as an honourable man.

I faced it for a week, and in the end I decided to find out what my wife and boy were doing, and whether they needed help from me; and then to act in whatever way appeared best for them all. I also resolved to conduct my inquiries without seeing Violet. I never had any power of reason where she was concerned; or she when she dealt with me. It would be just a look and a cry,

and our arms outstretched. . . . How mine ached for her! . . . No, I must not see her.

My appearance was greatly changed by my beard, and by the different manner in which I dressed, and even spoke. Also, I was a little altered by my illness, and by the hand of time, which grips one so suddenly after thirty-five. I scarcely feared recognition, but I bought a pair of coloured spectacles when I reached London, as an additional precaution. I went down from Ludgate Hill in a compartment with two men whom I used to know. They did not recognise me, though I tested my disguise by speaking to them. Violet might have recognised my voice, but even she could not have recognised my appearance.

She had moved from our old house, but I had no difficulty in tracing her, or learning what had taken place after my disappearance. A man who had probably stolen my watch and pocket-book at the time of the accident had been found drowned with them on him. He was disfigured beyond recognition, and had been accepted for me at the inquest. Violet had obtained what little money I had left. She had invested it all for the boy, and had kept him and herself for two years by giving lessons in painting and

music, and by singing at concerts. She had a good voice—it used to thrill me like the quiver of a 'cello—and she was clever at music and many things. At the end of two years she had married again. He was an elderly, well-to-do man of business, who had been a client of mine. He was a good fellow, and he would do well by her and the boy. They did not need me any more.

I bought a revolver and cartridges, and found an empty compartment in the train. I think that would have been the end of the story, only the fair-haired woman had slipped a photo of the fair-haired baby into my hand as I left Ashingham; and I thought I would take a last look at it. I had always liked the baby from the first time it seized my rough finger in its chubby hand. The little mouth would always pucker into a smile when she saw me. I kissed the smiling face, and threw the revolver

out of the window. I must go back to the baby and the fair-haired woman, and to my duty. Violet used to say that I had a "mania for duty." She and I always argued about such things. Lucy held that a wife should not argue with her husband; and she never talked about duty—only did it. I suppose most people would consider her a better woman than Violet. She was less exacting, less wilful, more open to reason, more free from vanity. She never quarrelled with me. Her eyes never flashed at me through hot tears. Her foot never stamped at me. Her words never stabbed at me. The fair-haired woman was best, I said to myself—I said it over and over again, as I travelled down to Ashingham. And suddenly I tore my newspaper into shreds. "It's a lie!" I cried aloud. "A lie!"

There was an old gentleman in the corner. He kept his eyes fixed on me till the next stopping station. Then he hastily alighted. I laughed long and wildly after he had gone. How it would frighten the fair-haired woman, I thought, if she heard me laugh like that. I took a savage, insane delight in picturing her crouching in a corner and trembling. But I knew she would do nothing of the sort; only take my arm and say I was ill, and pity me, and try to do things for me. It would be easier to bear if she would leave me alone; but she appropriated me so entirely in her unobtrusive way; made so sure of me; talked to everyone about "her husband;" liked to be spoken of as "my wife." My wife! I would tell her what she was, I cried fiercely.

I changed my mind, if ever I really had such a cruel and wicked



I saw her husband. He was directing two porters.

intention, when I saw Lucy waiting in the dog-cart outside the station gates. She waved her hand as the train came in; and when I came out she gave me a smile that was not her usual quiet smile, but a sudden ripple of delight, like the baby's laughter.

"It is cold for you, Lucy," I said, as I sprang into the cart. I had to say something.

"I am not cold inside," she answered, with the same childish smile. "I am *very* glad to see you."

"I am glad to see you," I declared. "Little—wife!"

It was the first time I had called her that. Of all the hurt of that time it hurt me most.

I talked and pretended to make merry all that evening; but I lay awake and struggled with myself, and made good resolves, long after Lucy had gone to sleep. I would be a good husband to her, and a good father to the little girl, and forget the others. I would go to town again at the end of the week, and buy some toys as a Christmas present for the baby; I would buy a bracelet for the—for my wife. My wife! I put my hands on my face, and unmanly tears trickled through. I was unnerved at the time, and had lost the self-control which is usual to me.

I went to London and bought the presents, and returned to the railway station. Somehow—I have never realised how it happened—I found myself in the train for Tulse Hill. I had decided a dozen times that I would never go there again; but the desire to see my wife and boy seemed to have overmastered me. There was no risk of detection, I assured myself. I would call and pretend that I was an old friend of myself, and talk to her, and ask to see the boy. I would see her; hear her voice. I should have done this mad thing; but on the platform at Tulse Hill I saw her husband. He was directing two porters who were carrying a rocking-horse; and he himself was loaded with a medley of parcels, evidently toys. No doubt he had something for Violet, too. He had always liked her and the boy, and they had always liked him. He would make them happy. I could only make them unhappy. They did not want me. I would go home. I laughed that I had called it that. I went "home"—to Ashingham.

I came to think of it as home after a time; and but for my memories my life would have been a happy one. Lucy was not a part of myself, as Violet had been, and she did not share my tastes for music and books and deep thinking, but she was very companionable. She was well educated, and very intelligent in business matters, and a great help with the farm—a loyal and devoted wife, who put my interests first in everything; a sensible, kindly English lady, with a mind as sweet as her face. I admired and esteemed her beyond words.

After a couple of years, her brother suggested that we should join him in South Africa, where he was doing well. The opening which he offered seemed advantageous, and Lucy pressed me to take it, though I knew that the parting from her old friends and surroundings was a great wrench to her. She was a great help to me in Africa also, and it was largely due to her that we prospered so greatly. She had the knack of making friends and keeping them. In the same way, she made a friend of me and kept me. For, if I must give a name to my feeling towards her, I should call it strong and affectionate friendship. It was possibly the same feeling that she called love. At any rate, in three years she never found out that it was not. Violet would have found out in three minutes!

If Lucy lacked Violet's passion and brilliancy, she did not lack depth of affection or of character. She was an ideal mother, and guided our little one so unobtrusively that the child never felt the guiding hand. Sometimes I think that she guided me in the same way. I grew less hasty, less intolerant, more ready to see the good points in other people and the weak points in myself. She never tried consciously to influence me, or, indeed, realised that I needed improvement; but the example of her life influenced me to live better, and when she was gone the influence was left.

It was enteric, and the end came very suddenly. We expected her to recover right up to the last; and when the disease took a

turn the wrong way there was scarcely time for farewells. "Baby," she whispered in the husky fever-voice. "You *can't* be a better father to her, dear, but remember that you are mother, too—I don't think you have ever known how *much* I love you. It has been—a happy-time!"

I did make her happy, I think; and I don't suppose she blames me, now she knows. She was never one to blame people.

So she was gone, and the baby was left—a pretty, prattling mite of three. I lived for the child; and when my property rose in value, I sold it and returned to England, because I held that the best women grow there. After careful deliberation, I took a house in West Dulwich, so that I could keep an eye on my boy. I had no idea of divulging myself. No inducement in the world could have made me wrong little Mayday. That was her mother's pet name for her—the one romantic fancy of an unromantic woman, she used

to say. She would have said that it was my duty to watch over the boy, I was sure.

I heard that he was attending the preparatory school for Dulwich College, and doing reasonably well; but it was some months before I saw him. At last, I met him walking home one afternoon. He had grown tall and clean-limbed, a good-looking lad, favouring his mother. He had her large dark eyes, and they had a friendly smile for the world in general. As he passed, I noticed that his tie was black. He could not smile so if it were his mother, I thought. But I followed him home; and then I saw Violet. She ran to meet him at the gate in her old headlong, laughing way. She used to rush at me like that. She, too, wore mourning; mourning such as a woman might wear for a husband some time dead. Everything seemed to whirl round, and I fainted. My eyes opened on my old writing-table. I was lying on my old sofa; and Violet was sprinkling my face with scent-spray. She had been crying; and I knew she had seen the likeness to myself in me. I nearly cried out to her. Then I remembered Mayday, and shut my eyes before she saw them opened. After a few moments I lifted myself a little on my elbow and tried to bow.

"I see that I must have fainted," I said in a quiet, formal voice. "I am greatly indebted to you for your kindness to a stranger."

She bent her head in the graceful fashion that I remembered, and smiled her old brilliant smile.

"You do not seem like a stranger," she said in her frank way. "You—you are not connected with anyone named Dane, I suppose?" I shook my head, and she sighed. "You are so like—someone that I remember—We have not met before, have we?" I tried to speak, but my voice choked in my throat. "You are still faint. Let me give you some water."

She poured out some water and handed it to me. How quick her movements still were, and how her smile warmed me!

"No, Madam," I said at length, "we have not met before. I could never have forgotten you."

She frowned slightly at my boldness. Then our eyes met and held us as when I first saw her twelve years before.

"I do not think I should have forgotten *you*," she said frankly. "I have never forgotten—the one who was like you. He was my first husband."

"One does not forget those things," I told her. "My wife died a year ago. I have one little girl. You have children?"

"One boy; his son. . . . My second husband is dead also."

"I have no second wife," I said brusquely. It hurt me to hear her speak of him.

She flushed hotly and drew herself up. How often I had pictured her like that!

"You are perhaps well enough to go now?" she suggested, with an angry flash in her eyes.

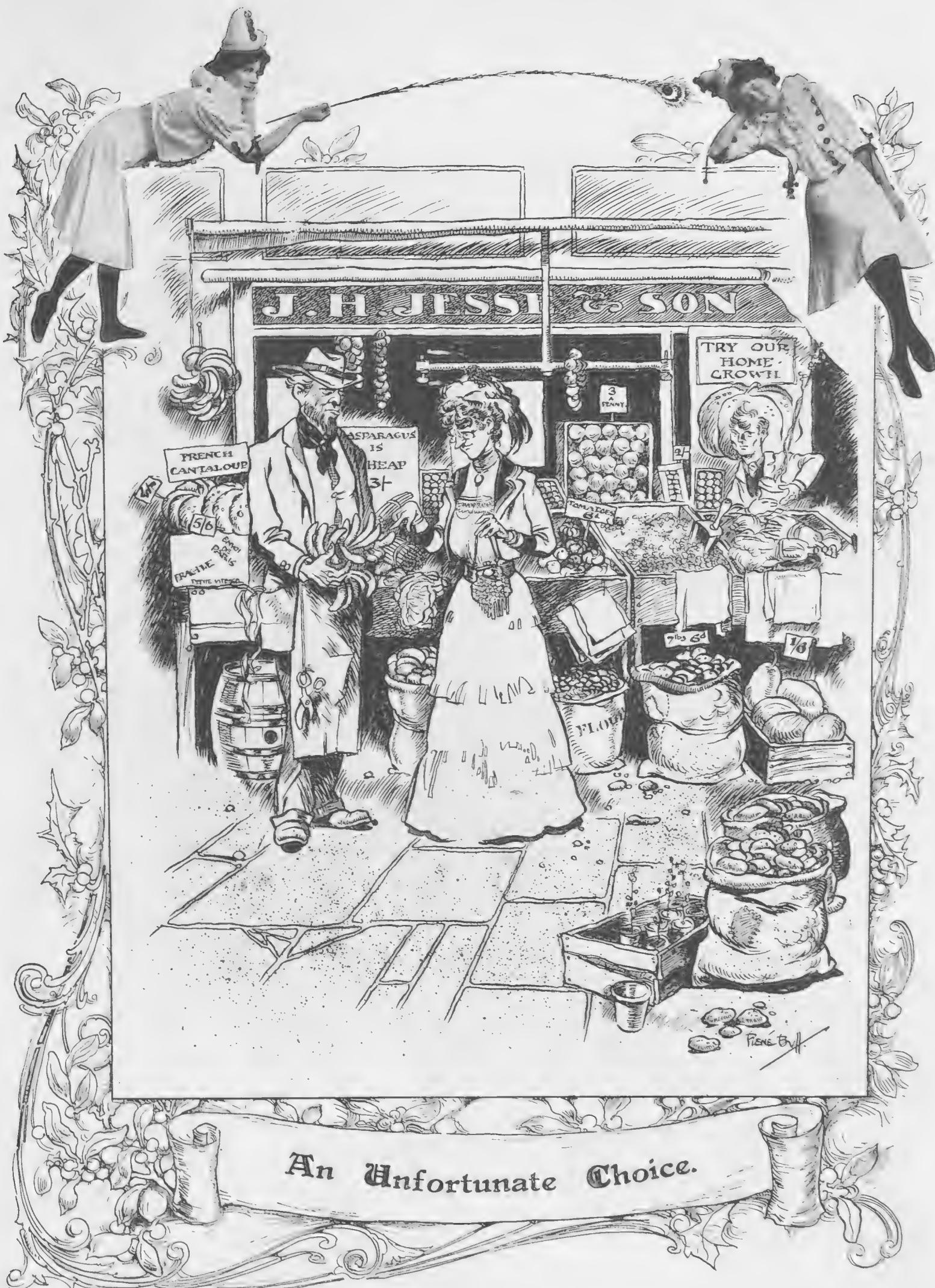
I tried to rise; but she saw that I was still unsteady, and restrained me gently with her hand.

"I am perhaps over-ready to take offence," she said. "You did not mean anything, of course?"

She looked at me.

"I regret my speech," I said; "but—yes, I meant it."

[Continued on page 18.]



An Unfortunate Choice.

THE SHORT-SIGHTED LADY: I don't care for your bananas this morning, Mr. Jesse. That seems to be the only ripe one.

MR. JESSE: That ain't a banana, Mum. That's my thumb!

There was a long silence, and she clasped and unclasped her hands.

"I cannot be angry with you," she said at last, "for thinking that I should have been more loyal to my husband. It seems, when I look at you, as if he had come back to reproach me. . . . I married again, for the sake of my boy. My second husband knew my reasons. He was very, very good to me. It hurts me now that I did not care for him as—as he cared for me. But—Perhaps you understand—"

"I understand," I said. "I did not love my wife—in that way. . . . I cared for her very much; but I loved—an ideal—someone who was—like you."

disliked me, or Mayday had disliked her, we might have continued to struggle; but Jack and I were companions from the first, and Mayday would cry after Violet.

They settled matters for us, in the end. I had gone into Violet's house to help Jack with his lessons. Violet was sitting at the other side of the table sewing; and the nurse brought Mayday to walk home with me. When she saw Jack standing beside me she puckered her little mouth for a moment.

"I've got your daddy," the boy teased her.

"Then I'll have your mummy," Mayday said; and she rushed at Violet, and Violet flung down her sewing and snatched Mayday up in her arms; and Jack smiled his big, good-humoured smile.



"Then I'll have your mummy," Mayday said; and she rushed at Violet, and Violet flung down her sewing and snatched Mayday up in her arms.

I buried my face in my hands. When I lifted it our eyes met again, and then our hands.

"I never question an impulse," she said with forced gaiety; "but we are rash people to make friends so quickly."

Then she jumped up suddenly and walked over to the window and wiped her eyes. She remembered, as I remembered, that she said that when she made friends with—her first husband.

I knew at once what would happen if I stayed near her. It was running too great risk of detection, I warned myself, and I must go away; but I did not go. Every man has some one passion that overmasters him. Mine was my love for Violet. I struggled against it at first, but the struggle was useless. After a time it seemed to be needless; for I soon found out that she would never suspect my identity. She was too much in love with me as I was, to see me as I had been.

Violet struggled too. She had loved my memory for so many years; and she strove hard to be loyal to it, and to set Jack against me in her mind, as I set Mayday against her in mine. If Jack had

"You can have half of mother," he said, "and I'll have half of your father. How would you like that, Mr. Davidson?"

"I should like it best of everything in the world," I said. "Violet?"

Violet did not answer; only looked up at me and smiled. Then she bent down and kissed Mayday.

"You shall have your fair share of me, little Mayday," she said.

We have been married again for five years now, and she has kept her vow. There are hundreds of ways in Violet that I always admired, and still admire; but her passionate affection for Lucy's child is, to me, the crowning proof of her goodness, though she will not have it so.

"We love one another too ridiculously to be jealous of memories," she says. "I would have you faithful to them, as you are faithful to me."

You who have read this story know if I am faithful to Violet; and if I am unfaithful to the dear woman who sleeps across the sea.

THE END.

The Result of Christmas Cheer.



THE FORCE: Now, then, Sir, what are you a-doin' 'ere this time o' the mornin'? It's just going six.
THE CITY MAN (who has had a mixed evening—whisky and nap): Passh Six.

DRAWN BY LAWSON WOOD.



ILLUSTRATED BY DUDLEY HARDY.

DEAR MR. FORTESCUE,—Can you help me? You must. My niece Iolanthe, whose father was head of the Barsinister-Robinsons, is a beautiful girl, and intensely romantic.

Now, we want her to marry, as the easiest cure for that complaint. She is quite penniless; but, as they live in a charming house in the country, and keep a pony-phaeton, there is no pathos about it, and the young men will not come to woo.

Iolanthe is a sweet girl, and really deserves a coronet, but looks more like getting a curate.

Between ourselves, I have a little scheme on hand, and I want your advice. The child is stage-struck, and that will help us a lot.

Can you get her a nice engagement? A manager ought to be glad to have her.—Very sincerely yours,

LILIAN HAMILTON.

P.S.—Of course, you are doing this for me. I shall not forget.—L. H.

The Albany,
Piccadilly, W.

DEAR GORGONZOLA,—Have you room for a pretty girl brought up in the odour of sanctity and sweet peas? She has unfulfilled yearnings towards the stage. Kindly see if you can fix her up.

It is a romantic child; fond of murmuring canals; melodious cockatoos; and sentiment with the measles generally. —Yours benignly,

JACK FORTESCUE.

The Flamingo Theatre,
London, W.

DEAR FORTESCUE,—Let me have a portrait of the angel-child. If she is in the meridian of the possible, you know, I don't mind victimising the public for an old pal like you.

I say, dear chappie, as your biography is not quite a compendium of innocence, please tell me in what relation you stand to Lucy Gray, or whatever her name is.—Yours to all eternity,

DICK GORGONZOLA.

The Albany, Piccadilly, W.

DEAR MRS. HAMILTON,—I am, as you know, always your devoted vassal; ever ready to impose on my friends, or myself, to please you.

Will the front row of the chorus do? Kindly send me her photograph in a decolleté gown, if you can; I don't think it need be as elliptical as evening-dress.

I will send her a book on menus—a much more important matter than being word-perfect in her part. She must study it very carefully, or she will be asking for roast peacock when she yearns for sardines in aspic. Just the sort of thing to get on a fellow's nerves!

May I hope that, if I carry through this delicate affair to your satisfaction, I shall be restored to favour—the only genuine form of bliss for me in this gloriously wicked world? I have been penitent a good while now, and penitence does not agree with me—it is worse than two bilious attacks at once. To err is human: to forgive—

(Can you resist the compliment implied in that dash?)—Most sincerely yours,

JACK FORTESCUE.

The Bivouac,
Bourne End.

DEAR MR. FORTESCUE,
What do you mean? How could you be so cruel? Are you ever serious? Don't you understand that Iolanthe wants to be an actress of the first rank, straight off? I am awfully hurt. I was about to take some bonbons and an illuminated text (my own work) to a bed-ridden invalid, but I must try a church bazaar instead. I feel too depressed for charity to others; I want some for myself. I will give you one more chance, in case I did not explain fully at first.

It is like this: dear Iolanthe is too delicate and high-strung to undergo the fag of getting up (that is the correct term, isn't it?) an intricate character-study by a modern dramatist. She dotes on Shakespeare, and has decided to begin with her in the balcony scene at home; it would make a kodak hysterical.

Of course, you will make the critics say sweet things about her.—Very sincerely yours,

LILIAN HAMILTON.

P.S.—The river is lovely: the backwaters are deserted and shady. I forgive you. There!

L. H.

The Albany, Piccadilly, W.

ADORABLE GORGONZOLA,—Brace yourself up for palsy or paralysis. The maid I mentioned has read Shakespeare till she knows him better than Corelli. She only wants to start as J-UL-IET! Honour bright, I am not getting at you; and what is more, it will have to be done, for her aunt is a ripping woman and has left the

[Continued on page 24.]



Iolanthe is a sweet girl, and really deserves a coronet, but looks more like getting a curate.

A Christmas Ghost on Tap.



BENJAMIN BINKS (suffering from a surfeit of ghost-stories, and listening to the tap, tap of the tassels of his dressing-gown as they touch the stairs) :
Good heavens! I'm certain I can hear footsteps following me downstairs.

DRAWN BY H. RADCLIFFE WILSON.

legend of her loveliness on my broken and contrary heart. It is no good trying to come the matinée dodge with them.

Burnish up your thinkomobile, and get an inspiration. Remember, it's your move.—Yours ever, JACK FORTESCUE.

The Flamingo Theatre, London.

DEAR FORTESCUE,—If you find Hades full when you go there, I believe you will have the impudence to start an opposition show on your own.

How in thunder do you suppose I am going to intimidate a man to Romeo with your come-into-the-garden kind of Juliet? Besides, she'll probably marry him, and I don't want that on my conscience, which is already loaded to the water-line with my own sins.

Will your friends put up enough money to run the extravaganza for a month?

I don't like the job a bit: still, if it will aid you in your Byronic business with the aunt (a widow, I *presume*), I will do my best.—Yours to all eternity, DICK GORGONZOLA.

The Albany, Piccadilly, W.

MY DEAR MRS. HAMILTON,—Note the "My"! I am going to reform and lead the simple life. How can a fellow be, what you call, "sensible" with a pretty woman? I can't, anyway, and I don't propose to revive my childhood's faith in miracles by trying to. I am so overjoyed at your forgiveness, and the promise it implies, that I shall feel like an angel with one wing until that promise is fulfilled!

Concerning the Iolanthe idyll: let me talk plainly. If you want her to meet men who get vertigo in the brain when they see a pretty girl, she must go into musical comedy and be vivacious as well as virtuous. You could not hire those fellows to attend a serious play. The girl will be as safe at the theatre as if she were in her own garden throwing cherries into a curate's mouth at three paces.

You have made me so happy that I must go and have something to eat, or I shall start writing poetry!—For ever and ever yours, JACK FORTESCUE.

The Albany, Piccadilly, W.

DEAR GORGONZOLA,—The wild gazelle, on my advice, will abandon her morals to musical comedy. I have rubbed it into her people that she will be as secure there as in her own conservatory, after a dance. What weird notions the provincials have of theatres! You can thank your stars that I am alive to give you a good character. Better put a six-penny stamp on it.

Try and put the girl, whose name on earth is Iolanthe Barsinister-Robinson, in your new piece, as I want to get to the terminus of the affair.

Switch your Press-agent on to me, and I'll cram him with facts and fiction about the lady, till nobody will know her from a big success. Yours always, JACK FORTESCUE.

TELEGRAMS.

Miss Barsinister-Robinson to Mrs. Hamilton.

Shocked. Going home to-night.

IOLANTHE.

Mrs. Hamilton to Mr. Fortescue.

Distracted by a wire from Iolanthe. Please write fully immediately. The suspense is awful. What shall I do?

LILIAN.

Mr. Fortescue to Mrs. Hamilton.

Try eau-de-Cologne and a salmon cutlet. Suspense no good to anybody; I never use it myself.—JACK.

The Bivouac, Bourne End.

MY DEAR IOLANTHE,—Why don't you come and see me? I cannot for the life of me imagine what can have happened.

I suspect you have been a bit of a goose, for I am sure Mr. Fortescue would have looked after you.

I have the utmost confidence in Mr. Gorgonzola. He is a bachelor, not a married man.—Your loving aunt,

LILIAN HAMILTON.

P.S.—You must tell me everything.—L. H.

The Albany, Piccadilly, W.

DEAR GORGONZOLA,—What sweet infamy have you been up to now?

I rather gather from Mrs. Hamilton that you are a monster of iniquity. You see, I told her that virtue would not melt in your mouth—enough to arouse any woman's suspicions, eh?

My temper is 120 in the shade, so hurry up with an unabridged explanation.—Doubtfully yours,

JACK FORTESCUE.

The Flamingo Theatre, London.

DEAR FORTESCUE,—My thoughts are hot enough to give me sunstroke. I say, for heaven's sake keep your sweet-pea maidens for the millennium: I absolutely refuse to assist Beauty in Distress under your auspices any more.

What an awful hole a super-simple young woman can put you into! Any explanation I have to offer will be riddled with ridicule till it can bear no possible resemblance to the truth. Whew! You don't know how mad I feel. The worst of it is that you are the last man in the world to resist the temptation to make a joke of the affair.

If you were here and you grinned, I'd knock you down, sharp: I feel on the imminent verge of manslaughter if I see a man laughing across the street.

Look here, old chap, the whole thing is a howling misunderstanding. On my honour, I don't know how to begin, but here goes.

I had just been sorting out girls for dancing and diaphanous business generally, when your Iolanthe came along and twittered out something I either did not hear or paid no attention to. If she had only let me absorb the fact that she came through you all would have been well. I was in the devil's own hurry to get off. I just clean forgot myself for the moment, and, thinking I was engaging a dancer, I unfortunately asked her if she had a good leg.

Then, quick as lightning, to cover her confusion and my own, I said, "Let me look at—" and reached down for my Engagement Book; but she didn't let me finish the sentence. Great Scott, Fortescue, how she screamed! You could have heard her in the Bay of Biscay. She scared me so, that I couldn't say a word. I put out my hand to pat her, or do something, I didn't rightly know what, and called her, "My dear." That finished it. She pulled up her skirts and rushed out of the place, yelling for all she was worth.

There was no more work for the rest of the day; every soul went into convulsions. The story

has received so many sardonic embellishments that my life has not been worth living since. I cannot even look a super in the face.

I suppose it will blow over one of these days; but I feel as if I were doing fancy skating on some particularly thin ice.—Yours pretty riled,

DICK GORGONZOLA.

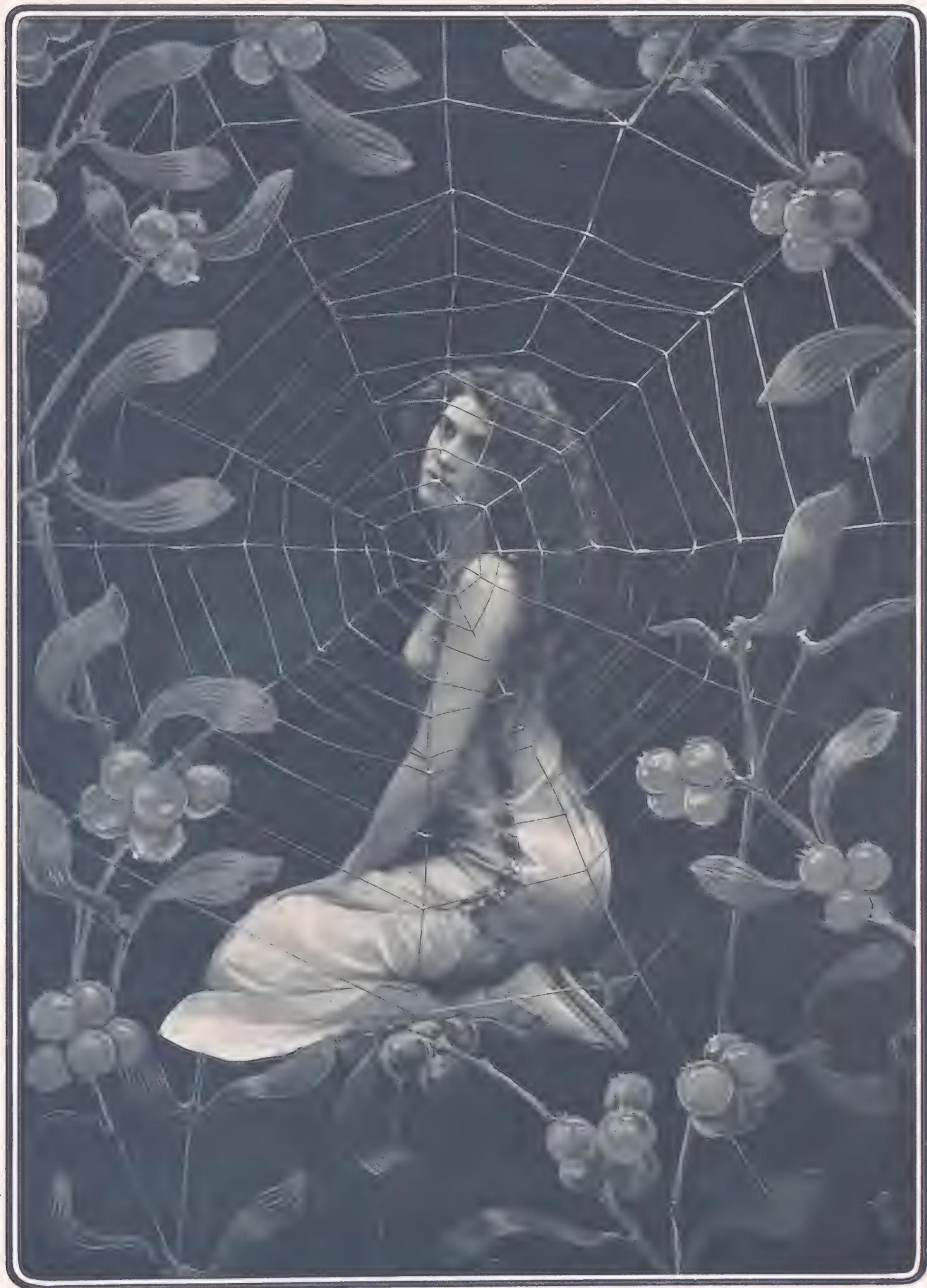


She only wants to start as JULIET!



I unfortunately asked her if she had a good leg.

“Oh, the Mistletoe=Bough.”



AS ALLURING AS THE MISTLETOE - BOUGH: THE MISTLETOE - WEB.

Setting by "The Sketch": photograph by Reutlinger.

The Fashionable Fairy.



THE PIXIE IN PINK.

Drawn by Dudley Hardy.

A Poem in the Rime.



THE FROST - FLOWER.

Setting by "The Sketch"; photograph of Miss Pauline Chase by Bassano

Fashioning the Ancient Monuments.

MISS SKETCH ON HER TRAVELS IN EGYPT.



MADE REALLY BEAUTIFUL!—THE SPHINX IN THE LIKENESS OF MISS MARIE GEORGE.

Miss Sketch, travelling in Egypt, finds that she cannot forget the faces of the footlight favourites with whom she is so familiar. Wherever she looks there arises before her the likeness of one of the stage beauties. She sees them even in the Sphinx, in the great Temple of Abu-Simbel, in the Temple of Hathor, at Denderah, and in the Colossi of Memnon; and she is bound to confess that, being a very up-to-date young lady, with a proper appreciation of the claims of beautiful woman, the sight pleases her—an attitude of mind for which she begs the forgiveness of archaeologists.

ARRANGEMENT BY "THE SKETCH"; PHOTOGRAPHS OF MISS MARIE GEORGE, AND OF MISS GERTRUDE GLYN AS MISS SKETCH, BY BASZANO.

Fashioning the Ancient Monuments.

MISS SKETCH ON HER TRAVELS IN EGYPT.



MADE REALLY BEAUTIFUL! THE FIGURES BEFORE THE GREAT TEMPLE OF ABU-SIMBEL IN
THE LIKENESS OF MISS PAULINE CHASE.

Arrangement by "The Sketch"; photographs of Miss Pauline Chase, and of Miss Gertrude Glyn as Miss Sketch, by Bassano

Beauty in the Berg.



THE ICE-MAIDEN.

Setting by "The Sketch"; photograph of Miss Leonora by Bassano.

The New Game-Bird.



PLUMP AS A PARTRIDGE: THE RED-LEGGED PIERRETTE.

Drawn by Dudley Hardy.

The World in Apple-Pie Order: A C



IF ALL THE WORLD WERE APPLE-PIE.
IF ALL THE SEAS WERE INK.

We would point out that this illustration is entirely photographic—that is to say, it is built up of photographs welded together by a "Sketch" Art

ARRANGEMENT BY "THE SKETCH"; PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE MISTERS GLADYS AND DO

: A Christmas Phantasy in Photography.



IF ALL THE TREES WERE BREAD - AND - CHEESE,
WHAT SHOULD WE HAVE TO DRINK ?

er by a "Sketch" Artist. The trees are photographs of loaves, cheeses, and fancy bread; the earth is an apple-pie; the houses are loaves; the sea is ink.
THE MISSES GLADYS AND DORIS COOPER AND O'BRIEN SPECIALLY TAKEN BY BASSANO.

A Ro-Ronsense Rhyme.



"DICKERY, DICKERY DOCK, THE MOUSE RAN UP THE CLOCK."

Setting by "The Sketch"; photograph by Reutlinger

Rara Avis.

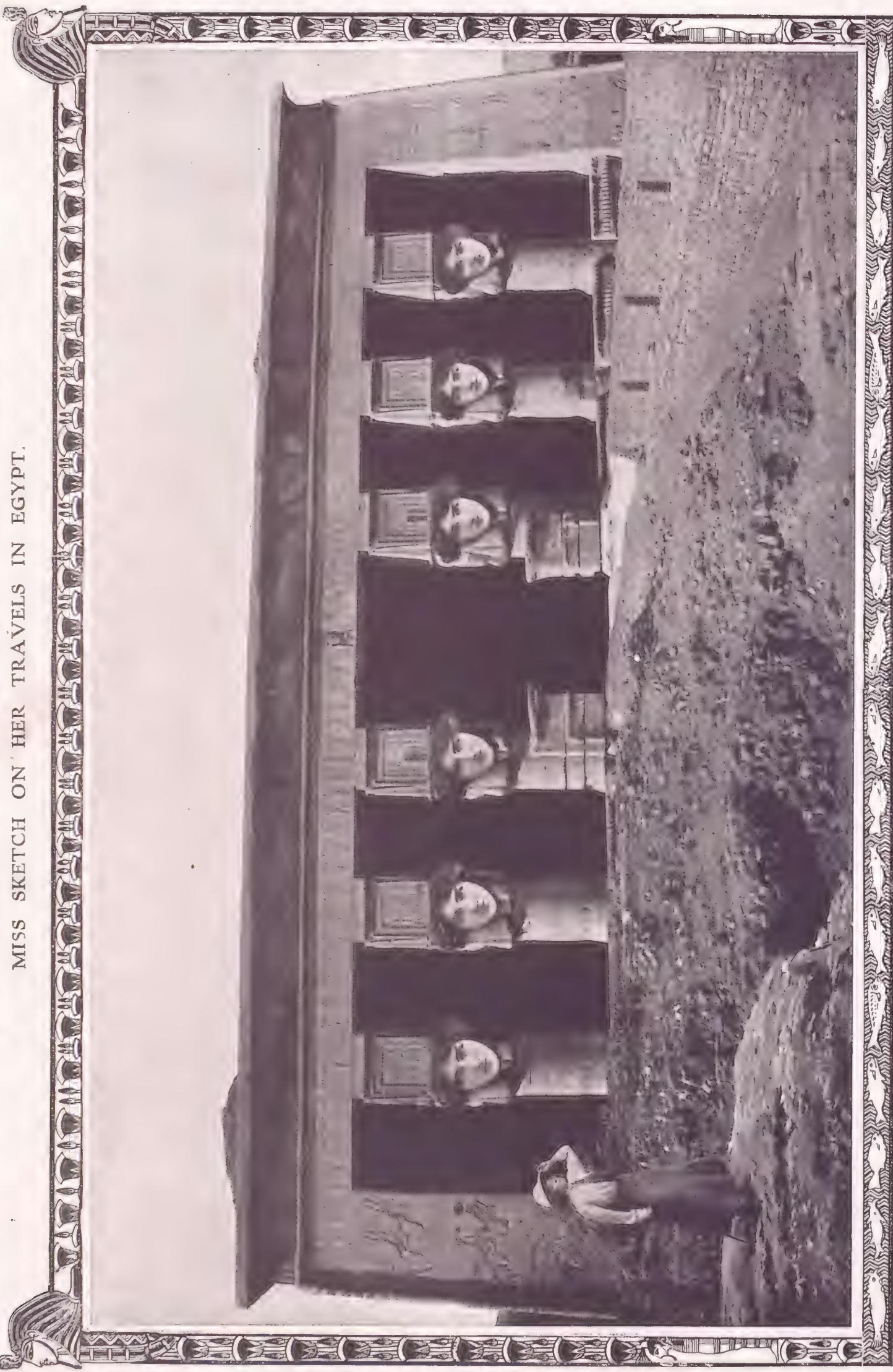


THE BIRD OF PARADISE

Drawn by Barribal.

Fashioning the Ancient Monuments.

MISS SKETCH ON HER TRAVELS IN EGYPT.



MADE REALLY BEAUTIFUL! THE HEADS ON THE PILLARS OF THE TEMPLE OF HATHOR, AT DENDERAH, IN THE LIKENESS OF MISS LILY ELSIE.

Arrangement by "The Sketch"; photographs of Miss Lily Elsie by Foulsham and Baddeley; photograph of Miss Gertrude Glyn as Miss Sketch by Bassano.

Fashioning the Ancient Monuments.

MISS SKETCH ON HER TRAVELS IN EGYPT.



MADE REALLY BEAUTIFUL! THE COLOSSI OF MEMNON IN THE LIKENESS OF MISS ELIZABETH FIRTH.

Arrangement by "The Sketch"; photographs of Miss Elizabeth Firth, and of Miss Gertrude Glyn as Miss Sketch, by Bassano.

A Christmas Card :

A MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL OF YOU.



AND SO SAY ALL OF US!

Photograph of Miss Billie Burke by Bassano.

Currant Topics.



CINDERELLA'S PLUM - PUDDING.

Photograph by Reutlinger.

"The Sketch's" Own Particular Ghost.



LEARNING TO HOLD HER HEAD UP: THE SPOOK OF SPOOFTON GRANGE.

Arrangement by "The Sketch"; photograph of Miss Marion Lindsay by Bassano.



THE HOME COMING

By WALTER E. GROGAN. ♦ ILLUSTRATED BY F. R. SKELTON.

tobacco, and lighted it leisurely. The cobbler watched him with the slow interest of the West.

"That ring o' yours, it's cutting into your flesh."

"Ay." The sailor-man looked at it with a soft smile. "It's been there ten years. My finger growed, but it didn't."

"You should have 'em cut off."

"It may be I will—now." He gave a low, happy laugh. "Now, mister, that I've come home."

"Here?"

"Hereabouts. I shipped from Dartmouth."

"Ah. That's a long way from St. Bawstall. All of thirty mile. We reckon Dartmouth folk furriners."

"I suppose, mister, no one goes out of St. Bawstall?"

"I dunno; I dunno about that!" cried the cobbler, jealous for local reputation. "The Stanbrys are rare 'uns to travel. Young George went off ten year ago, and never heard on again. And now Robert's off to London to see lawyers. Fulish man, with the harvest comin' on. He'm going to-night—leven o'clock from here, and he do catch the twelve from Plymouth. 'Scursion."

The sailor-man looked away from the cobbler.

"Travellers indeed," he said. "And young George was never heard of again?"

"A letter or two for the first year. Then nothin'."

"Drowned?"

"Dead, of course. Drowned most likely."

Presently the sailor-man moved away, and, climbing the little

THE sailor-man walked up the main street of St. Bawstall village. It was the drowsy time of mid-morning. One side of the street glared in the sun with whitewash and blistering paint, the other was in grey shade. From the trees fringing the village came a subdued twittering chorus of birds. A brick building—red and hot—gave forth a drowsy humming. At the open door stood two small children. They were securely in shade and were snatching a fearful joy gazing into the schoolroom from which they were truants. The sailor-man saw them and chuckled. He held up two pennies in the sun and whistled to them. They came across the strip of playground, and held out dirty hands.

"What d' ye say?" he demanded, when their sticky fingers closed upon the coins. They said nothing, but raced away to a huckster's shop on a corner.

"The same," said the sailor-man. "It ban't altered a bit. That's Granny Pedicott's. And the old forge. . . . A new school, though. . . . And it's ten years, every day of ten years."

He was obviously a sailor-man although he wore a shore-going suit of slops. He was bronzed and bearded, and he rolled a little in his gait. On the little finger of his hairy brown hand a plain silver ring was embedded. It made a curious indentation, like a tight girdle.

The village street was nearly empty. In the doorway of one cottage an elderly man sat mending a shoe. He looked at the sailor-man with interest. Strangers were rare in St. Bawstall.

"And there's Joshua Wonacott," said the sailor-man, "not a day older. Nothing's altered but me. I reckon no one'll know me." Then he chuckled delightedly and lurched across.



"That ring o' yours, it's cutting into your flesh."

"Fine day, mister," he said.
"It be that. You'm a furriner seemin'ly?"
"I've come from some thousands of miles away."
"Ah." Wonacott nodded wisely. "A seafaring man."
"A hard-faring man." The sailor-man chuckled again. "Until two days ago I hadn't been in old England for ten years."

"That's a slice of life," said Wonacott.
"Out there, yes. In England—now I'll lay you've been doin' pretty much the same as you're doin' now every day these ten years. Nothing particular's happened to you."
"No—no, you'm right," answered the cobbler, after putting down the shoe, scratching his head, and considering. "The old wife be up to churchyard, and the grass growing over her these fower years. But I don't call to mind nothin' else of conseckince."

"Death he visits everywhere," said the sailor-man. "But he's slow here and he's quick out there." He jerked his head vaguely towards the West. "He left his card on me once or twice." He pulled out a short pipe, packed it with black

hill on the left, came to the lych-gate of the churchyard. Here he waited for a few minutes.

"After ten years and no news a churchyard's a terrifyin' place,"

he mused. Presently he knocked out his pipe and entered. At first he went to the old lichen-grown grave-stones and, before one, stood a few minutes bareheaded. "In memory of Robert Stanbury . . . also Mary Stanbury his wife" ran the inscription. He moved slowly—it appeared anxiously—to the new graves. From one to the other he passed. At last he paused.

"Old Foxworthy—only last year. Then Grace is all alone now." He sat down by the grave and thought. From time to time he examined the plain silver ring upon his finger. The sun was very hot and the air soft and slumbrous. He was very tired. He had not slept the previous night. The fever of home-coming had been in his veins. He yawned once or twice, and then stretched himself luxuriously upon the ground. In a few minutes he was sound asleep.

It was late when the sailor-man awoke. The sun was low, shooting long shafts of mellowed light between the trees. A shadow stretched over him. It was the shadow of the white cross which stood in the centre of the churchyard.

He went back into the village. One or two men said "Good evening!" to him, staring at the foreigner, as was usual in St. Bawstall. All men not of the neighbouring parishes were held as foreigners. The sailor-man chuckled. "And none of 'em knows—none of 'em. There ban't one as remembers me."

Seated in the parlour of the inn, he ate voraciously of cold meat. The low casement windows were pushed open. A little breeze that had lifted with the dropping of the sun played softly with the chintz curtains. There was a pleasant smell of cooling air and flowers—big handfuls of roses in china pots.

Through the open window came the drone of voices. The keen edge of his appetite gone, the sailor-man had ears.

"That's old Wonacott," he mused, catching the cobbler's high-pitched tones.

"Goes to Lunnon at 'leven o'clock to see lawyers. No one knows why or the reason of it. 'Mazed, like his brother George, seemin'ly."

"That's Robert," mused the sailor-man, grinning happily at the roses. "I'll have time to get to Berworthy before he sets out. Old Wonacott has a bitter tongue."

"I know why," said a deeper voice.

"You, schoolmaster?"

"Aye. He wants to prove his brother George dead. I read of it in an Exeter paper. Leave to suppose the death of George Stanbury." The sailor-man pushed his plate away.

"Us have supposed it long enough," Wonacott grumbled. "A passel o' nonsense."

"In law, no one's dead till the Judge says so. 'Tis this will

of their uncle in Canady. The money—four thousand pound, I hear it is—well, this money is left to George, or, failing him, Robert. George, it seems, was named after him."

The sailor-man stared at the wall and then whistled.

"Uncle George to leave four thousand pound! 'Tis a marvel. And Robert—" He broke off chuckling. Suddenly he jumped to his feet and struck a fist against an open hand. "He shall have it—he shall have it! I've enough. And I'll let bygones be bygones. He was hard, but I was a racket boy. He shall have it, by gosh!"

He settled his score, went up the village street, and struck across the spur of moorland towards the small, lean farm of Berworthy. The sky was saffron in the west, from the lanes came the slow clatter of contented horses seeking their stables.

"I'll say nothing at first—nothing," thought the sailor-man. "Then I'll up and declare that the money shall be his. 'The ne'er-do-well has no need of it, Bob,' I'll say, 'Tis only a half of what I have made in Californy.' That's what I'll say."

The spur of moorland humped itself between the village and Berworthy Farm, a ridge with bracken, heather, and gorse, and here and there an outcrop of granite. Coming to the summit of the ridge, the sailor-man looked down at the farm. A hundred yards away, walking towards him, was a tall, spare man, strongly built. He walked stiffly, like a man used to labour. Although he was obviously a farmer and it was a weekday, he wore his Sunday suit of dark grey, and a black bowler hat.

The sailor-man waited until the farmer, walking steadily and evidently plunged in thought, came to him.

"Bob!" he said.

The farmer stopped. For a minute he did not move. He was as still as a monument in granite.

"Who is that?" he asked hoarsely.

"Bob, I've come back!"

"You're dead—before God, you're dead!" The man spoke in a low voice that was harsh with passion.

"I've come home after ten years!" cried the sailor-man. "Is this how you meet me? There were hot words between us when we parted, but there's ten years set between then and now to cool 'em. Bob, let bygones be bygones."

The farmer lifted his hat. Very slowly he mopped his brow with a big white handkerchief. He was breathing hard. The hand that held his stick trembled.

"You, George?" he said at last, with a visible effort. "Come back? And us all thinkin' you dead these years. . . . It's—it's taken me aback. . . . Take no notice of my words. They're nought but empty breath. 'Twas like as a ghost spoke to me. I

"That's old Wonacott," he mused, catching the cobbler's high-pitched tones.



couldn't rightly think. . . . I'm glad I met you." He spoke the last sentence slowly.

The sailor-man held out his hand impulsively.

"Bob—you're the first to know me, the first to take me by the hand! 'Tis the tie of blood. I'd make myself known to none till I spoke with you. I've been in the village. None knew me. Spoke to old Wonacott and he told me of my own death!" He laughed. "And you're the first. I'm glad."

"None knew 'ee?"

"None."

"I'm glad," said the older man slowly. "And I'm glad I met 'ee, George. Yes, I'm ter'ble glad of that." He

I l o o k e d away from his brother as he spoke. "You'll come to Berworthy?"

"You were going somewhere, Bob."

"There ban't no hurry for that now," Robert said. His upper lip lifted in a furtive, mirthless smile. George also smiled. He was glowing with prospective generosity and a secret knowledge of Robert's present disappointment. Robert was terribly fond of money.

They went home together, down the rugged slope. Berworthy was cradled in the slow mists of a summer night. The light of the yellow moon swam in them, filmy, soft, luminous. A lamp set behind the fanlight of the farmhouse front door stabbed through the mists. From the outbuildings came the sound of a dog's fierce baying, gruff, angry, deep.

"That ban't a sheep-dog," said George.

"No."

"Big dog by the sound of 'en."

"Ay. A watch-dog," Robert answered slowly. "He'm big and strong and fierce. I've saved a bit, George, and I'm lonely out here. Only old Pratten sleeps in the house, and he'm deaf's a post. . . . The dog and the stories about 'en they keep strange folks away." The elder man chuckled a little. "When I—" He paused and shut his lips tightly. For the rest of the way he spoke absent-mindedly about old matters. When George was not looking, Robert watched his brother in a curious, speculating way. When George turned towards him he shifted his gaze.

They came to Berworthy without meeting anyone. Robert entered the parlour and ushered George in. He lighted a lamp and shuttered the windows. The shutters were stiff as though with disuse.

"The kitchen is good enough for me," said George, "besides being more comfortable." He shivered slightly, looking at the stiff horsehair chairs and sofa, at the wax flowers under glass shades, at the ordered precision of albums and family Bible on the little table. The parlour was reminiscent of painful Sundays and of burials. The larger table had a rug-like covering with a chenille fringe. In his mind's eye he saw it set out with tray, decanters, and glasses for the refreshment of mourners.

"You'm a stranger, George," Robert answered. "It's seemly to have you here. And Pratten be in the kitchen."

Robert unlocked the door of the chiffonier and produced a decanter of port. He poured out two glasses.

"There's a question on my tongue, Bob," said the sailor-man. "Grace—she's not married?"

"No." The elder man was behind his brother, stooping to place the decanter on the table. Into his lean face swept a look of concentrated anger—a cold, deadly, relentless anger.

"Thank God!" said George. "We were tokened ten years ago."

"She broke it off."

"Ay—with her lips. Her father forced her. You and he between you, Bob. That was why I went. You mis-called me. Said I was wild and a drinker, and no good. Perhaps you were right, perhaps you were wrong. 'Tis ten years ago. But I was the same flesh and blood as you." Some gleam of anger

came into the sailor-man's eyes. Memory stirred. And as suddenly as it came it died out. "But I've said let bygones be bygones, and I mean it, Bob. I've come back for Grace. I see she's free—old Foxworthy is gone."

Robert made no answer. His face was livid, he wetted his lips with his tongue. Outside came the sudden cry of the dog, half bay, half howl. The farmer turned his head and listened.

"She up and told me she'd never marry me while her father lived. And I swore unless she'd marry me then I'd never ask her again. . . . Ten years ago. That anger's dead now. 'Twas a foolish oath. . . . I was hot against her for years. Then I was took ill, and I remembered her. . . . And so, when things fitted, I came home. I knew there could be no other for her. . . . That's the ring she gave me, Bob. 'Tis part of me. In all my anger I hadn't the heart to throw it away. . . . It made me mad and sour at first. Now I do think it keeps my heart sweet."



For a moment the sailor-man crouched as though for a spring.

"You're a fool, George—a fool!" The farmer hissed the words at him. "Grace has forgotten."

"It's a lie!" cried the sailor-man, springing up. Then he added heavily, "Don't, Bob. Let's—let's go easy. I don't want to quarrel. . . . I've come from the church-yard. . . . We're born of the same flesh and blood."

"It's no lie," said the farmer. "Grace is going to marry me."

"You! I'll go to her. . . . We shall see, Bob. . . . I've come back. She thought I was dead."

"Ay."

"But I'm not. We shall see."

"She's given me her word."

"You shall give it back! By God, you shall give it back!" The sailor-man's voice was loud. He was facing his brother, his strong hands clenched, his eyes blazing. Suddenly his right hand went to his belt.

"Never. . . . She's mine."

"You shall—you shall!" The right hand sprang out, holding a sheath-knife. For a moment the sailor-man crouched as though for a spring. Then he threw his knife into the empty grate and covered his face with his hands, crouching in his chair. "Oh, my God! Oh, my God!" he whispered. "And he's my brother!"

In the following silence the farmer heard the slow noise of an old man unlatching the back door and sallying out. Old Pratten had gone to loose the dog.

The farmer strode to the grate and picked up the knife. He crossed to the chiffonier and replaced the decanter, and with it the knife.

"You'd have knifed me," he said heavily. "You're the same passionate, turbulent ne'er-do-well who killed our mother by your ways."

"That's untrue—that's one of your cruel lies," said the sailor-man. There was a yelp of fierce joy. The dog was loose.

"Have you any other weapons? Give 'em up if so, or—or you'll be doing me a mischief."

"I have nothing else," said the sailor-man. Then he rose from his crouching, while the farmer slowly locked the little door. "But we'll see about Grace. I shall claim her to-morrow."

"So you can—to-morrow—if you will," said the farmer. He stood in the attitude of a man listening.

"I will. I've come thousands of miles for her. She's mine. . . .

You know that, Bob, you know that. Ten years ago you knew it." His voice had again undergone a swift change. It was hard that they should quarrel, and his brother must see that he had the right of it.

"I knew that she gave you up ten years ago," said the farmer doggedly. The slow, shuffling sound of old Pratten mounting the stairs to bed caught his ear. He smiled.

"Her lips spoke it, but in her heart she held me. Look at it—unwedded for ten years. Grace wanted for no admiration. And you—what's a wife to you, you whey-blooded man? Curse my tongue! . . . Bygones be bygones. . . . Bob, we're brothers."

The appeal showed in the man's hoarseness. The elder man turned his head slowly, pursing up his lips. For a few moments he stared.

"I'll have no truck with 'ee. Get out of the 'ouse!" he said. He stalked to the front door. His brother followed angrily.

"As God's my witness, I came back with no ill-feeling. 'Tis your doing," he said.

"Get out!" said Robert.

"And glad to go!" cried the sailor-man, and flung out into the night. The farmer closed the door hurriedly.

There was a dead silence. A clock ticked half-way up the stairs. It sounded remarkably loud. Robert Stanbury counted the ticks. Suddenly there was a snarl outside, and the sound

of a dog's pattering feet, then a startled cry, and a hoarse, joyous yelp.

"Bob! Bob! In heaven's name, come! Call off your dog—call off—" The cry broke off, there was the sound

of a fall, a scuffle, and the low, vicious noise of a dog worrying something.

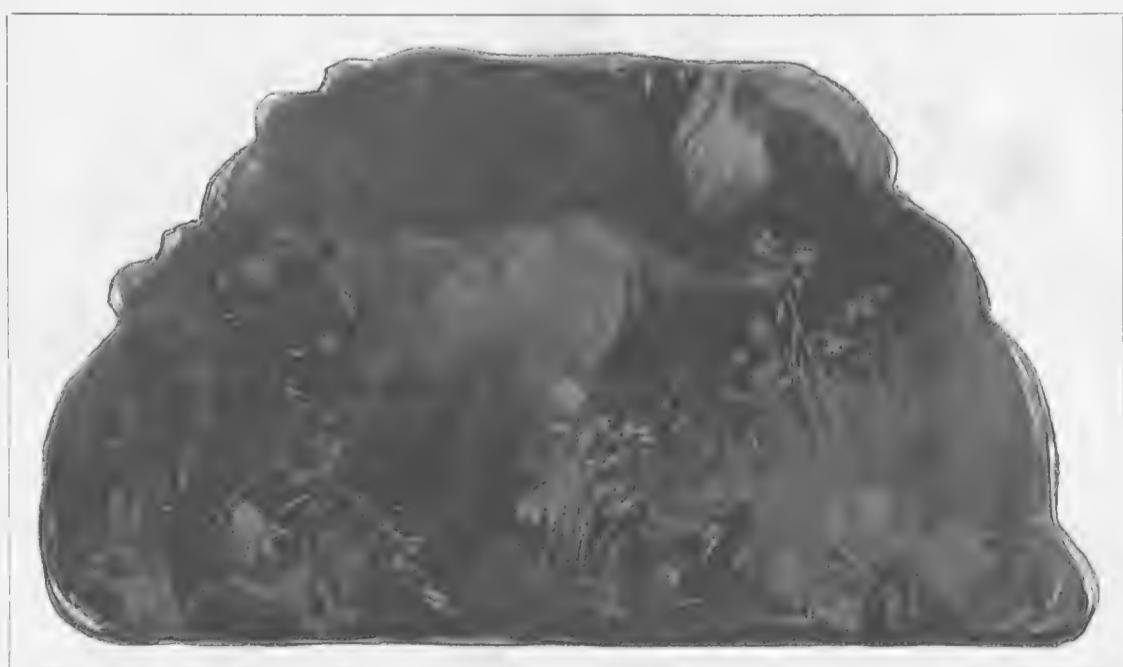
The farmer went into the parlour and looked at his watch.

"Half past ten," he whispered—the awful silence of the house insisted upon his whispering. "There's heaps of time to catch the 'leven train." He locked up the glasses and turned out the lamp.

The night was quite quiet when he went out. A big dog left some-



"And glad to go!" cried the sailor-man, and flung out into the night.



A big dog left something it was still worrying and came towards him joyously.

thing it was still worrying and came towards him joyously. He beat him off. Then he went on his way to entreat a judge for permission "to presume the death of one George Stanbury."

THE END.

THE HYDE PARK HOTEL.

WHO is there in these gadabout days, when home is a place to be left as often as possible, and the inevitable worries of the life domestic, over which the servant problem hangs like the sword of Damocles, are to be dodged if they cannot be entirely avoided, does not recall the famous verse of Shenston:—

Whoever has travelled life's dull round,
What'er his stages may have been,
May sigh, to think he still has found
The warmest welcome at an Inn.

Did Shenston live to-day, however, his sigh would be transformed into a smile of satisfaction, or something indicative of a stronger pleasurable emotion, especially if his "stages" took him in the direction of Knightsbridge, and he found the hospitality of the Hyde Park Hotel. Perhaps he would then endorse Dr. Johnson's memorable remark that "nothing has yet been contrived by man by which so much happiness is produced as

It is a feature possessed by no other establishment in London, and by few in any other part of the world. This is a staircase erected outside the building at each end, so that the occupants of rooms on any of the nine stories may descend to the street with as much ease and comfort as by the main staircase—a fact supremely reassuring to those who have any fear of a sudden outbreak of fire. Happily, however, so thorough is the supervision of the building, the staircase has never had to be used for such an emergency.

Another of the special features of the Hotel is the Grill-room, which is one of the most charming in London. Situated on the first floor, and lighted from the street, instead of having to be lighted artificially in consequence of being below the street-level, as are most other grill-rooms, it is always greatly in demand, even by the casual visitor who is shopping in the neighbourhood.

As the Hotel caters essentially for families, its suites are arranged



Reproduced by permission of A. Burkart and Co., Ltd., London, E.C.

VIEW OF THE HYDE PARK HOTEL FROM THE SERPENTINE LAKE.

by a "good tavern or inn"; for no one will need reminding that our hotel is the modern equivalent of the old-fashioned inn; not that any eighteenth century inn ever offered one thousandth part the comfort to be found at the Hyde Park Hotel.

Hotels resemble one another in most particulars. The Hyde Park Hotel is the exception. It is, for the most part, only like itself. Thus it is essentially a place in which a family may have a home away from home, and where the unattached woman is specially catered for, as she is catered for nowhere else.

Here a man may take rooms for his wife and his daughters, confident in the assurance that they will be as safe, in every acceptation of the term, as they possibly could be were they under his supervision all the time. It is an assurance, too, which is certain to appeal to the mothers of grown-up daughters if they are coming to town on a shopping expedition, for which the Hotel's position is superb, standing as it does near the top of Sloane Street and close to some of the finest shops in London.

To the guests themselves there is one feature of this magnificent house, with its large, lofty, and beautifully appointed and decorated rooms, which cannot fail to make a strong appeal

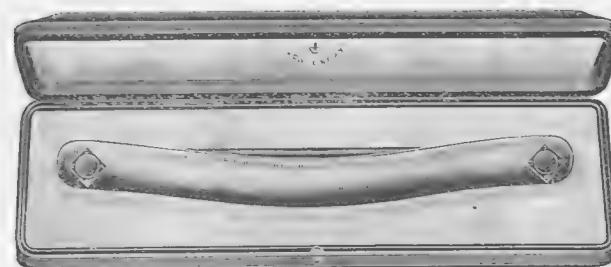
to meet most ordinary wants—from a single bedroom, with bath and sitting-room, to accommodation extending to a couple of reception-rooms, with five bedrooms and two bath-rooms enclosed behind a single private door. On the other hand, the visitor who needs only a bedroom will find as comfortable a lodging as can be obtained in London. So great is the demand for these rooms that the management is constantly compelled to inform would-be guests that all the accommodation is booked up, and there are times in the year when the rooms and suites could easily be filled two or three times over. One reason for this eminently satisfactory state of things is that people who once occupy these suites keep them on indefinitely. There are families who, having once come, never go anywhere else—eloquent tribute to the excellence of the service, the perfection of the cuisine, the courtesy of the servants, and last, but by no means least, to the care, attention, and supervision bestowed on every department.

It is therefore not surprising that such an establishment, so splendidly situated, with its unrivalled views over the Park, so admirably designed, so palatially planned, decorated, upholstered, and furnished, should be the success it is.

Their Majesties' Jeweller, Silversmith, and Dressing-Case Manufacturer.

J. C. VICKERY,

179, 181, 183,
REGENT STREET,
LONDON, W.



VICKERY'S NEW FLOWER-HOLDERS FOR LADIES.

Solid Gold Flower Holder, set Cabochon Rubies or Sapphires, as illustration, **65/-**, set three stones, **72/6**, Plain Gold, **50/-**.



NO. N 362.
DIAMOND, RUBY and PEARL
Ear-rings, only **£5 5s.**



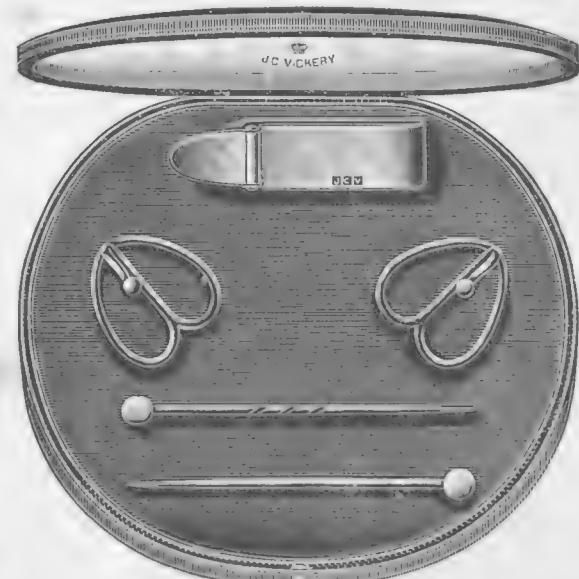
NO. N 105.—Solid Gold Curb Bracelet, with "Lucky Horse-shoe." 9-ct. **£1 17s. 6d.** 15-ct. **£2 12s. 6d.** Platinum and 18-ct. Gold **£4 15s.** With Horse-shoe set Gems forming the word "Dearest." 9-ct. **£5 18s. 6d.** 18-ct. **£7 18s. 6d.**



Sterling Silver Combined Taper and Match-Holder, for writing or smoking table, 3*1*/*4* in. high, only **16/6.**



NO. N 260.—PEARL and BRILLIANT Initial Scarf Pin, **£3 19s. 6d.**
Pearl and Rose Diamond ditto, **£1 18s. 6d.**
Any Initial supplied same prices.



NO. N 472.—Vickery's Useful Set of Solid Gold Tie-Holder, Pair of Heart-shape Tie Clips, and Two Scarf Pins, only **34/6.** With Tie Clips and Pins set Pearls, only **47/6.**

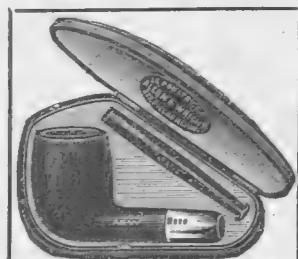
NO **XMAS** GIFT

is more USEFUL or more sure of APPRECIATION than a
FIRST-CLASS BRIAR PIPE.

ALLEN & WRIGHT'S

Celebrated "ARMY" BRIAR, The Smoker's Favourite.

No. 34.
Silver-mounted,
Handcut Vulcanite
Mouthpiece,
Medium Size,



3/6
Straight or Curved
Stem.

Same Pipe
in London-Made
Real
Morocco Case,
Medium Size,

5/6
Straight or Curved
Stem.

BRIAR (Same Shape and Size), Silver-mounted, with
Finest Genuine Amber Mouthpiece and Case } **14/6**

BRIAR (Same Shape and Size), Mounted 15-ct. Gold, with
Finest Genuine Amber Mouthpiece and Case } **27/6**

Same Shape and Size in FINEST MEERCHAUM, Silver-
mounted, with Genuine Amber Mouthpiece
and Russia Case } **25/-**

COMPANION CASES.

Covered Real Morocco and London Made.

No. 67, containing 2 Silver-mntd. BRIARS (as above), Vulcanite Stems	10/6
.. 66 .. 2 .. (1 straight & 1 curved), ..	each, post free.
.. 68 .. 2 .. (both curved), ..	
.. 108 .. 3 .. (2 straight & 1 curved), ..	15/6
.. 98 .. 4 .. (2 straight & 2 curved), .. and 6-in. stem for indoor use	25/-

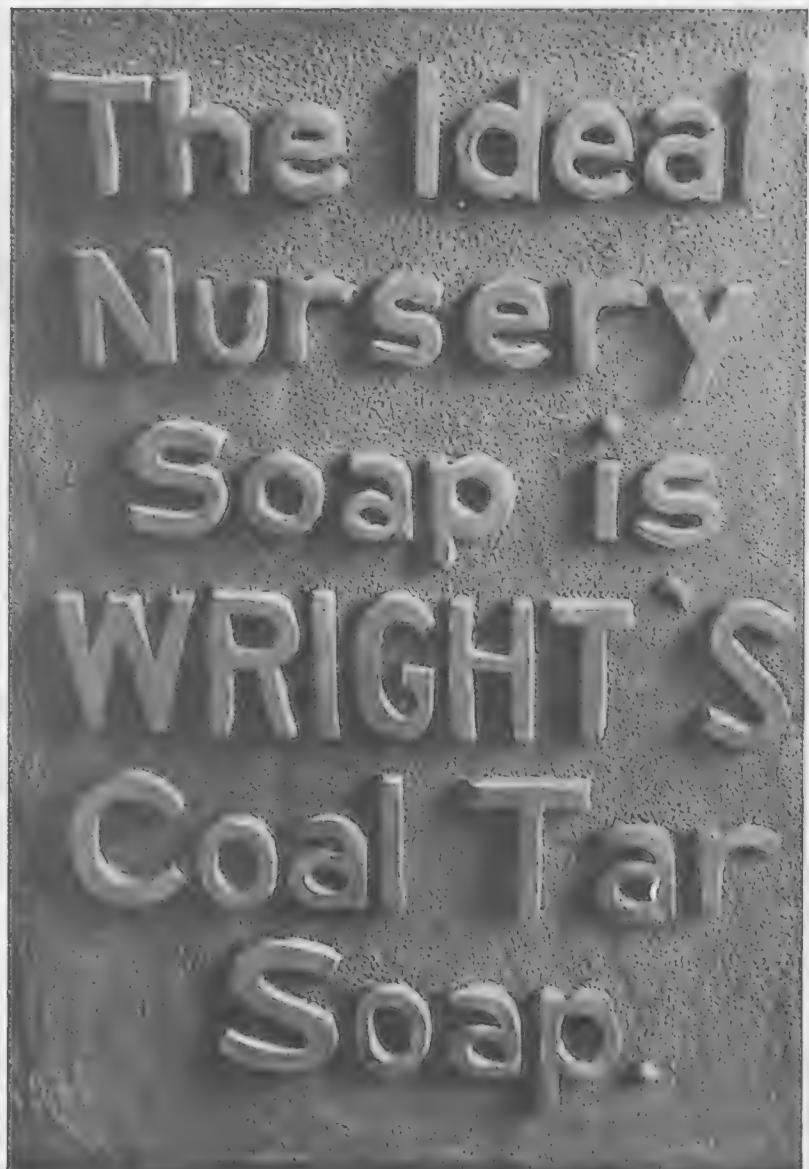
ILLUSTRATED CATALOGUE OF PRESENTS, POST FREE.

217, Piccadilly, W.
(S.W. Corner of Circus.)

26, Poultry, E.C.
(Opposite Mansion House.)

31, St. Mary Axe, E.C.
(Opposite New Baltic.)

LONDON.



Tommy's Treasure-Hunt.



TOMMY: Ah! It's no good, I'll have to give it up—and the sixpence's still in it.

DRAWN BY NOEL POCOCK.

A Stretch—of the Imagination!



THE LADY HELPER AT THE CHRISTMAS PARTY: Do you think you could eat any more plum-pudding, Willie?
WILLIE: I think I could, Mum, if you'd let me stand up to it.

DRAWN BY J. MACWILSON.

**This page is missing from the print copy used for digitization.
A replacement will be provided as soon as it becomes available.**

**This page is missing from the print copy used for digitization.
A replacement will be provided as soon as it becomes available.**



THE INCOMPLETE MESMERIST

By HENRY A. HERING.

ILLUSTRATED BY LAWSON WOOD.

"THAT'S my nephew," said Michael T. Morton, indicating a well-built, thoughtful-looking young man who had just nodded to him. "He holds an international record, havin' assaulted one of your European kings. I reckon

he'd have been beheaded if they'd had their way, but his father brought him over here an' stuck him in as manager of the Tontine section of the Dakota Amalgamated. He's makin' that railroad hum—keeps his rollin'-stock well up to date, and the way he handles his traffic is amazin'. He has a future in front of him, Sir; but he has a past as well. You should hear him tell the yarn. Sounds like a novel, but it's solid fact. Samson J. Truefit, our minister, confirmed it, an' he gave me a few additional details; but there's nothing discreditable to Eppy. He was the victim of circumstance—most amazin' circumstance, too."

"You might tell me the tale," I suggested.

"Don't mind if I do. Well, my nephew, Epeus T. Morton, who just passed us, was intended by his father to be our Ambassador at the British Court. He was to run strong on the lines of James Russell Lowell and old man Bayard, so he was reared on poetry an' oratory, an' I reckon his after-dinner speeches an' anniversary poems would give points to either Lowell or Bayard.

"Of course, he had to be trained for the job. You aren't planked down as United States Ambassador straight off, so my brother, Thomas K. Morton, got him fixed up as attaché in Dravia, one of those darned pigeon-holes of kingdoms that are stuck somewhere in Central Europe. It was a good spot to start trainin' in for the London Embassy, an' Samson J. Truefit, our Minister there, was a man who could be trusted to teach him the ropes. So Thomas K. waltzed sorter contentedly about Wall Street all day, an' in the evenin's began to cultivate relations with travellin' British aristocrats, for the sake of his boy.

"All went well enough with Eppy. He was pertic'ler smart at the job, an' in the absence of Samson Truefit, he wrote a despatch home to Washington on the cuckoo-clock industry of Dravia which is quoted as a masterpiece to this day. He worked hard at foreign tongues, includin' Esperanto, an' of course, he took the lead in baseball. Perhaps he got a bit of a head on, but anyway, he was a prime favourite at the Court, and his father, Thomas K., was happy.

"Well, one of those days, a mesmerist turned up at Dravia. You know 'em. They ask folk to walk onto the stage, fix 'em' with their eyes, make passes with their hands, an' then turns 'em into guinea-pigs or dromedaries, makin' 'em act as foolish as those animals do in real life. I've seen it done often enough, an' never could make out whether it was a put-up job or downright solid phenomena. Bex was that pertic'ler mesmerist's name, an' he gave an entertainment at the Court. He called for victims, an' up went the royal librarian an' the royal astronomer to be hoccussed. He turned one into a kangaroo, an' the other into a

lion, an' made 'em play at rounders an' hop about the stage like circus animals. Then he turned 'em back into themselves, an' sent 'em to their seats lookin' foolish.

"Now Eppy was sittin' that night nex' to a live Princess—the Princess d'Hannibal—a real high-stepper. No Fifth Avenue girl could touch her in deportment an' general style, an' Eppy was clean gone on her. But she was stand-offish, as she came from the oldest stock in Europe. Her ancestor was a cousin of the Hannibal you read about in history-books, an' he assisted his relative over the Alps, makin' his pile outer the job. The ancestral dollars appear to have been dwindlin' ever since;

but the smaller the pile, the bigger the family pride, an' the Princess we're talking about, well, she just treated Eppy as if he was mud.

"However, there he was, fixed up nex' to her for that evenin', an' he did his best to be fascinatin'. Of course, he thought the mesmerist performance footlin', but he pretended to be as interested in it as she was.

"Will any other gentleman oblige?" asked the mesmerist. "If he'll kindly step up, I'll do the rest."

"Do go, Mr. Morton," said the Princess.

"You really want me to?" he asked.

"Of course I do—I should love to see you mesmerised."

"Eppy got up. He was anxious to oblige the girl, but, Princess or no Princess, he wasn't goin' to allow this yer Bex to turn him into a dromedary an' make him play at rounders with a guinea-pig. Bex might turn a durned foreign professor or astronomer inside out, but he'd show that Princess what a Harvard man was made of, an' he trusted to her Hannibal blood that she'd appreciate the difference. He sat down on the chair on the stage, an' Bex began to fix him with his eyes, an' make passes in front of his nose. Eppy stared back at Bex, an' took no notice of his hand-passin'. An' there they were, glarin' at one another, till one of 'em—an' that wasn't Eppy—began to lose his temper.

"The audience had expected to see Eppy tumble off his chair an' start hoppin' about just as Bex told him; but as time passed an' no dromedary or guinea-pig eventuated, they saw that somethin' unexpected had happened, an' the popular excitement grew. Samson J. Truefit stood up with the rest of 'em, an' he told me afterwards he never wanted to cry out 'Rah! Rah!' more in his life; but the etiquette of Courts restrained him. Eppy would have done with a bit of encouragement, for he was in a tight corner.

He'd determined not to let Bex lick him, but Bex had years of practice at the glare business, an' Eppy was only a beginner. He met the performer with a defiant gaze, an' froze on to it with all his



Eppy stared back at Bex, an' took no notice of his hand-passin'.

might; but he felt himself gradually thawin'. He was just goin' off it into a slide when Bex shrugged his shoulders an' lifted his eyes, an' the spell was broken.

"This gentleman is too much for me to-night," he said. "I've been travellin' hard all day, an' I'm tired. But to-morrow I'm givin' a performance at the town theatre, an' if he'll oblige by comin', I'll turn him into a camel with seven humps before he knows where he is."

"I'm leavin' for my holidays in the mornin'," said Eppy; "so I'm sorry I shall have to disappoint you."

"That's a pity," said Bex. "I should uncommonly have liked to turn you into a camel or a possum."

"Not carin' to discuss the matter, Eppy got down amidst gen'ral applause, and joined the Princess.

"That was real clever of you, Mr. Morton," she said. "Now, how did you manage to vanquish him?"

"Eppy, I reckon, smiled conceitedly, an' fixed his dressie. "Oh, I know a bit about mesmerism," he said. He lived to regret those words.

"Do tell me how it's done," said the girl.

"Then I s'pose he replied she didn't stand in need of any instruction, as she'd mesmerised the whole Court already. I can see him sittin' there, like the moonstruck farmer he was. They were in the back row, Eppy an' the girl. Her aunt was flirtin' with the Turkish Minister on the other side, an' he had the Hannibal Princess all to himself as he'd never had before. She had stepped down from her high horse—elephant, I oughter say, considerin' her parentage—an' she was rapidly unfreezin'.

"So you're goin' away for your holidays to-morrow, Mr. Morton," she said, eyein' him over the top of her fan. "How long will you be away?"

"A month, I reckon," he answered.

"So long as that!" she said, heavin' a sigh, like one of the elephants when it had plugged up to the top of the Alps, an' saw what a cussed distance it had to travel yet.

"Eppy heard it. "If a lady I know said she didn't want me to go, I reckon I'd stop," said the youngster.

"Oh, how nice of you," she replied. "I wonder who that lady can be. No, don't tell me. Mademoiselle Napoleon? No? The Contessa Italiano? No? No again? Fräulein von Hohenzollern? No? Well, you do surprise me. I could have sworn you were gone on her at the last ball." Eppy told me a bit of the conversation, an' I can fill in the rest. You can take my word for it, that Princess was up to every woman's trick of tactics an' strategy. She wasn't descended from Hannibal's cousin for nothin'.

"Well," she said at last, "you must tell me who the lady is when you get back. You can think about her while you're away, an' here's a flower for your buttonhole, which you can pretend she gave you. If she finds she can't get on without you, she'll drop you a line or give you a long-distance call."

"Every time the bell rings, I shall be hopin' it's the message," said Eppy, arrangin' the flower in his buttonhole. I 'spect he kissed it first.

"Well, the end of it was that he went back to his rooms feelin' mighty proud of himself. He'd made more progress with the Princess that night than in all the months he'd been there."

"Nex' day he was off to Paris, an' he'd a full fortnight at the picture-galleries an' the historical sights of that city. Then he got a letter with the Dravia postmark—

"Someone said he'd come back if he was wanted. Come slick."

MARY D'HANNIBAL'

"I can't be certain of the wordin', but that was its meanin'." For anything less, Eppy would have been riled to have to leave Paris in the middle of his picture-gallery an' historical sight-seein'; but that letter clean bowled him over, as he knew the Princess wasn't accustomed to write in that strain, an' it sorter indicated she couldn't live without him. He just sat down an' wrote: "Comin' at once. I shan't be more'n a hundred kilometres away when this

reaches you. Kindly make early appointment for me to throw myself at your feet." That, or words to that effect. Then he took the first train back, an' you bet he was moonin' over her letter the whole blamed journey into Central Europe.

"You should hear him describe his return to Dravia. "Winter had gripped the capital in its icy hand," he says, "an' the snow-clad city, with its lights an' gables, stood out like a dream-picture against the starry sky." That's a fine bit of wordin', isn't it? I

got him to write it down for me, an' I learnt it by heart. Then he went on to say that the tinklin' of the sleigh-bells was the only sound that smote his ears, an' that the keen frosty air acted on his constitution like iced champagne. I tell you, Eppy would have knocked Lowell or Bayard inter fits on the oratory tack if he'd gone on with the diplomacy business. Some of his talents are just thrown away on railroads.

"He drove straight to his rooms, an' either found a letter there from the Princess or he got it just after. I can see him tearin' it open. It read—

"To-night, at eleven, by the fountain on the eastern terrace."

"That was all, but it was enough to send the blood racin' through his veins. He was only twenty-three at the time, an' an appointment on a palace terrace in the moonlight with a live Princess would have made an older man than Eppy feel pretty bobbish.

"Anyway, that was how Eppy feit; but the place of meetin' struck him as chilly for the purpose, an' he hoped it had been cleared of snow. That was where his descent came in. There was no Hannibal in his family, but his grandfather was just as cautious when he fixed on the site of his stockyard at Chicago.

"You bet he dressed himself pretty spruce that night, an' he was by that pertic'ler palace fountain dead on time. A door opened, an' a muffled figure came out. Eppy walked briskly up to her. 'Princess,' he said.

"It is not de Princess," said a throaty voice. "I come to conduc' you to her." It was a blamed palace help.

"Lead on, I'll foller," said Eppy.

"She took him through the door, upstairs an' along passages an' corridors — that palace was built on the lines of a museum from Eppy's description of it. At last she knocked at a door, opened it, an' there was the Princess, readin' a pirated edition of W. D. Howells' works.

"So good of you to come, Monsieur," she said, risin' an' holdin' out her hand, which you may be sure that Eppy gripped tight. "Gretchen, help the gentleman off with his coat, an' mind you don't spoil his buttonhole."

"Then they were alone. Now, I've heard Eppy tell this yarn a dozen times, an' at this p'int it might have been an interview between a goods manager an' a rail superintendent, from what he gen'rally says. But I reckon it ran somethin' like this:

"Princess," he said, "I was struck all of a heap to get your letter. Here I am in reply," an' he looked at her affectionately. He once admitted to tryin' to take her hand, an' said she stepped back.

"Monsieur," she said quickly, "I sent for you because we are wantin' your help pertic'ler bad."

"It was Eppy who stepped back that time. He didn't care for the first person plural in pronouns just then.

"We?" he asked.

"Yes. It's a matter of State. I sent for you on behalf of the Queen."

"Now Eppy had a business interest in the State of Dravia, an' he had a pertic'ler respect for the Queen, but he'd not left the picture-galleries an' the historical sights of Paris for either one or the other. He'd come back for the sake of a girl, an' now she was talkin' somethin' like politics.

"Please explain," he said sorter drily.

"She took a chair. 'Sit down, Monsieur,' she said, 'an' please



"Mesmerised him into a tailor."



A door
opened,
an' a muffled figure
came out.

**This page is missing from the print copy used for digitization.
A replacement will be provided as soon as it becomes available.**

**This page is missing from the print copy used for digitization.
A replacement will be provided as soon as it becomes available.**

don't look so cross. If you oblige the Queen you oblige me. That oughter satisfy you.' You know the wheedlin' style they put on when it suits 'em.

"But Eppy was on his mettle. 'What do you want me to do?' he asked.

"'To save the King,' she answered.

"'To save the King!' he echoed, downright astonished. 'What's the matter with George Twelve?'—which was the name an' number of that pertic'ler Sovereign.

"'You remember Signor Bex, the mesmerist?' she answered.

"'I reckon I do—some. But what on earth—'

"'Do be patient, an' I'll tell you,' went on the Princess d'Hannibal. 'You don't know the kettle o' fish there's been to play since you left us, Mr. Morton. The whole world seems upside down.' Here or hereabouts she burst into tears, an' Eppy tried to console her. 'You've seen 'em do the same thing at theatres, if you haven't operated yourself, so there's no need for me to describe the business.

"Then she dried her eyes. 'This man Bex interested his Majesty,' she continued, 'an' he gave seances here. He raised spirits of the departed—among others, he raised the spirit of the late King, his Majesty's father.'

restore the King to himself, but he can't manage the job an' a quack from Vienna has had no better luck. The Queen is in despair at the notion of livin' with a tailor for the rest of her days, after bein' married to a European Sovereign; an' to make matters worse, his Majesty won't sign the treaty just fixed up with Russia, which, you know, goes dead against Germany. That was what Bex was workin' for all the time, an' unless it's signed by Sunday, Russia will back outer it. That's why I sent for you.'

"'But where do I come in?' asked Eppy. 'Samson J. Truefit is the man to work Washington for you.'

"'We don't ask the United States of America to help us,' said the Princess earnestly. 'We want you to do the trick. You told me you understood all about mesmerism, an' you were the only man this Bex couldn't hocus. We want you to overcome his evil influence over the King, and to restore his Majesty to himself an' friends. You'll do it for my sake, won't you?'

"I reckon that Epeus T. Morton, bein' reared in the United States of America, is not easily flabbergasted, but he was slightly surprised at that programme. In fact, he was a bit taken aback all round just then. He'd been recalled under false pretences, an' now he was asked to restore a King's identity. Most pertic'ler did



George caught hold of the chair, an' jabbed at Eppy with his scissors.

"'I hope his late Majesty hadn't been drinkin' again,' said Eppy.

"'He was under the table all the time, an' he wrote funny messages on a slate, so I can't be sure of it,' said the Princess; 'but anyway, this fellow, this Bex, got a tight hold over our gracious Sovereign in consequence. His Majesty actually allowed himself to be mesmerised. Then the Chancellor received information which caused him to open Bex's letters, an' what do you think he found? Bex was a political agent in the pay of Germany.'

"'The deuce!' exclaimed Eppy, struck with admiration at the cuteness of the Sauerkrauts.

"'Wasn't it?' she replied, 'Nat'rally the Chancellor said he was to be kicked out, an' the King unwillin'ly agreed to sign the order. But before this was done, Bex seemin'ly got a hint of what was brewin', for he obtained an interview with his Majesty, an'—here her voice sunk into a stage whisper—'an' mesmerised him into a tailor.'

"'A tailor!' Eppy exclaimed.

"'Hush. Yes, a tailor. Isn't it ghastly? That was a week ago, an' there he still sits in his room, makin' men's suitin's—havin' clean forgotten his real name an' address.'

"'You're jokin',' said Eppy.

"'Does it look like jokin'?' said the Princess, pointin' to her damp han'kerchief. 'So far we have managed to conceal the truth, an' have given out that his Majesty is sufferin' from a bad attack of mumps, but any day the facts may leak out. Dr. Piffer has tried to

he wish he'd not owned to mesmeric knowledge which he didn't happen to have. But he couldn't draw back.

"'You're goin' to help us?' said the Princess with a catch in her voice, lettin' her hand drop on the top of his.

"'Where the expert from Vienna has failed I can't hope to succeed,' said Eppy. 'I'll do my best, anyway;' but he spoke without much enthusiasm. He says he took no notice of the Princess's hand, but I don't believe him.

"'The Queen is waitin', said the Princess at last. 'We'd better be movin'.'

"They went down a few more corridors, an' up a few more flights of stairs, an' finally arrived at a door outside which a militiaman was on guard. The Princess tapped, an' the Queen opened the door.

"'Monsieur,' said her Majesty when they'd got inside, 'it was very kind of you to come to our assistance.' Then she held out her hand to him. He admits kissin' that one, an' then he said how sorry he was to hear her husband was in trouble.

"'You have explained all?' said the Queen to the Princess.

"'All, your Majesty,' said the other.

"'Then come along,' said the Queen. They followed her into the adjoinin' room, an' there, cross-legged on a table, sat George. Twelve of Dravia, gloomily surveyin' some garments. He took no notice of his visitors.

"'Herr Schneider,' said the Queen to him, 'here's a gentleman to see you.'

"The King looked up, an' Eppy says that tears were tricklin' down his nose.

"Ah, mein Herr," he said, "you've come about this coat an' vest; but you'll have to call again. I can't get the blamed things right."

"I ain't in any hurry for them," said Eppy; "they'll do nicely next week"—at which the King looked mighty pleased. "But I want to have a little talk with you," Eppy went on.

"Young gentleman," said the King, "call on business men in business hours on business only. I've no time for gossip."

"It ain't gossip," said Eppy. "It'll help you to get that bit o' suitin' right. Just you look at me."

"He said this in the full-blown, commandin' style of Signor Bex, an' he was glad to notice that George Twelve obeyed him. 'Continue to look at me,' he said, fixin' his eye like a hawk on the potentate.

"Now the mesmerism business looks simple enough when you see it on a theatre platform; but it ain't quite so simple when you work it in real life. Anyway, it wants a bit of rehearsin', an' never a bit of practice had Eppy. Instead of goin' off into a mesmeric trance, as he oughter have done, George Twelve got excited at the gen'ral proceedin's, an' when Eppy commenced makin' passes with his hands, just as Bex did, the King caught hold of his shears, unlocked his legs, got off the table, an' started brandishin' his weapon at him.

"Eppy backed a bit, still tryin' to fix George Twelve with his glare, but he wouldn't respond. As fast as Eppy backed George advanced, although the Queen tried to stop him.

"It was an awkward persis' for Eppy, for of course he'd to be mighty careful how he dealt with a European Sovereign. He'd have closed with any ordin'ry mortal straight off, but it isn't Court etiquette to treat monarchs in that style, even if they've been transmogrified into tailors. All Eppy could do was to grab at a chair, an' keep it in front of him for protection. But George caught hold of the chair, an' jabbed at Eppy with his scissors. The persis' was becomin' desperate, an' the Queen an' the Princess looked on sorter horror-struck.

"To save himself Eppy jerked the chair out of the King's hands, an' whirled it around, hopin' to keep him off; but George Twelve came of a first-class breed of Sovereigns, an' even the tailor business couldn't restrain his blood. He advanced on Eppy regardless of the furniture, an' this came down on the side of his head with a whack that sent him spinnin'. Whether it was the blow or the polished floor I don't know, but that European Sovereign fell flat on his nose. Eppy opines it was the polished floor, but it mayn't have been.

"Ye durned hayseed!" shouted the Queen at Eppy as she ran to assist her husband; but George sat up of his own accord, with murder in his eyes.

"Run!" cried the Queen. "Run for your life!"

"Only too glad of the hint, Eppy threw down the chair to cover his retreat, opened the door behind him, an' passed through at a canter. The King sprang after him. There was nothing else for it—Eppy had to take to his heels. All considered, I reckon it was the most discouragin' an' humiliatin' persis' an' attaché of the United States of America has ever been placed in. Eppy unlocked the outer door, an' ran through. After him came the King, to the astonishment of the militiaman on guard. He joined his royal master in the hunt, an' then came the Queen and the Princess. It was a regular high-class paper-chase, but there was a pair of shears in the business which made it unpleasant for the hare.

"Down the corridors an' vestibules of that palace they ran, an' in two minutes the parlour used by the Court would have been reached, an' all the painful business exposed,

when suddenly Eppy dashed into a fat old man in Court uniform who was hurryin' in his direction, followed by a heavy-built, bearded stranger.

"The first was the Chancellor of that historic kingdom. 'Hello, Monsieur! No sprintin' allowed here!' he exclaimed, when he caught sight of Eppy. 'Your Majesty!' he called out as the King turned the corner. 'It is the King,' he said to his companion. 'Stop him!'

"The bearded man caught hold of George Twelve as if he'd been a baby. He took away his shears as if they'd been a toy trumpet. He held the King before him, an' glared at him in a manner superior to anythin' Bex had shown, an' in less than two minutes that monarch's eyes were fixed. 'Will your Majesty kindly return to your boudoir,' said the stranger, an' George Twelve obeyed him.

"It was Blonney, the celebrated hypnotist, who'd come straight from the vicinity of Africa at the request of the Chancellor. He was the top-sawyer of the profession. In ten minutes he'd restored George safe an' sound to himself an' family, an' that night the Chancellor took on the signed treaty to the Russian Minister.

Nex' day Germany had the hump badly.

"An' now jest think of Eppy's feelin's as he left the royal palace that evenin'. They were mighty different from what they'd been when he went in. Instead of spendin' the intervenin' time discussin' private matters with the Princess, his principal business had been to knock down the reignin' Sovereign, an' he knew the matter wouldn't end there. He made his way to his rooms on foot, cursin' Dravia. The city didn't seem like a dream-picture to him any longer, or if it did, it was a nightmare. An' he'd lost most of his affection for the lady who'd called him back to it.

"Nex' day he reported himself an' the incident to Samson J. Truefit, who'd already heard about it from the Queen as a State secret. Her Majesty said she was sure that Eppy had only acted for the best, but of course it wasn't etiquette to have a gentleman at Court who banged George Twelve with a chair, an' sent him spinnin' on his nose; so Samson J. Truefit opined he'd better finish his holidays in Paris, while he negotiated a transfer for him with Washington. Eppy took his advice, but notwithstanding all attempts to keep the matter dark, full an' embellished pertic'lers of the whole event leaked out, an' in every

Court in Europe they were hummin' a song called 'Mister Morton an' the Tailor.' That ended Eppy's career. You can't make a United States Ambassador outer a man who's believed to have done something outrageously foolish. There's nothing kills like a comic song, an' when Eppy heard the words an' the catchin' music, he knew he was done for as far as diplomacy was concerned.

"Disappointment isn't the word for his father's feelin's. He felt it more than Eppy, who'd come to see what blamed silly business diplomacy is. Thomas K. gave him the control of the Tontine section of the Dakota Amalgamated, and some day Eppy will be a king in his own right—a King of Railroads, an' rich enough to buy up Dravia, George Twelve, Chancellor, and palace fountain included. You could see that in his eye as he passed us jest now.

"Eh? What about the Princess? I don't know for certain. She treated him like mud for a start, then she fooled him for her own pleasure, an' called him back to Dravia to make use of him. When he came a cropper I believed she returned to the mud idea—p'raps she composed that comic song about him. Mind you, that's only my notion. Eppy won't say a word against her, or allow anyone else to. That's where his Bayard trainin' comes in. Yes, Sir. I reckon that notwithstanding the unfortunate incident with George Twelve, Epeus T. Morton has been a dead loss to the diplomatic service of the United States of America."

THE END.

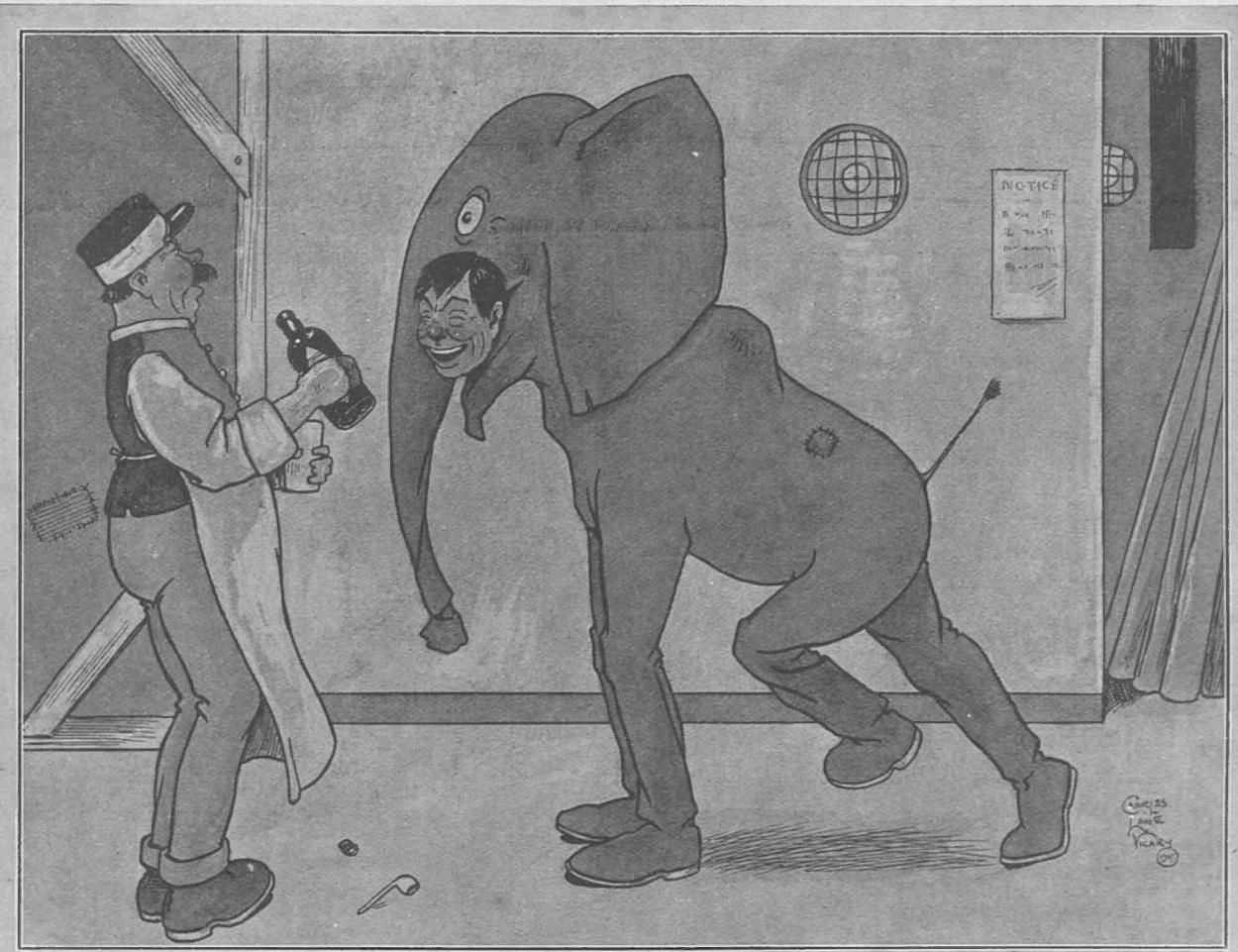


"Will your Majesty kindly return to your boudoir."

**This page is missing from the print copy used for digitization.
A replacement will be provided as soon as it becomes available.**

**This page is missing from the print copy used for digitization.
A replacement will be provided as soon as it becomes available.**

"Our Xmas Hamper."



THE DELIGHT OF THE BACK LEGS OF THE ELEPHANT ON HEARING THE OFFER OF A DRINK MADE TO THE FRONT LEGS.



DE BROWN-JONES (*meeting the family ghost*) : Hee, hee, hee ! What's a dagger in the middle to sixsh whiskies an' a bottle of champagne !

DRAWN BY CHARLES LANE VICARY.

